



Community Events in Photos

A big thank you to all who came to our VE Day jubilee celebration. Over 50 of you came to soak up the sun, chat with neighbours, friends and family. Food and games from the era were rejuvenated and enjoyed by old and young alike. We feel we did our bit to participate in the weekend of celebrations.



Bell Ringing

Gardening Club

There is still room on the upcoming coach trip - please contact Lynn if you want to come along.

Future Visits

Tuesday 21st July, 7pm."Snares Hill Cottage", Duck End, Stebbing

Cost: £6.00 per person including tea/coffee and cake (£7.00 non-members).

Snares Hill Cottage is a quirky 1½ acre garden with surprises round every corner and many interesting sculptures. A natural swimming pool is bordered by romantic flower beds, herb garden and Victorian folly. A bog garden borders woods and leads to silver birch copse, beach garden and 'Roman' temple.

Thursday 30th July, all day visit by coach to Otley Hall and Helmingham Hall Gardens, Suffolk.

www.otleyhall.co.uk / www.helminghamhall.com

Cost: £35.00 members, (£37.00 non-members). Price includes mid- morning tea/coffee & biscuits, ploughman's lunch, cream tea, 2 x garden visits and travel from Good Easter with Fourways Coaches. **Prior booking and payment required.**

Our first stop is Otley Hall, a Grade 1 listed late medieval building with 10 acres of gardens. The garden tour includes parts of an important design by Francis Inigo Thomas (1866-1950), featuring an H-canal, nutteries, croquet lawn, rose garden and moat walk. In addition, there are historically accurate recreations designed by Sylvia Landsberg, author of *The Medieval Garden*. These include an orchard, a herber, and a knot garden.

For more information, please contact *Graham Andrews (Chairman)* on 01245 442625 or *Lynn Ballard (Secretary)* on 01245 440880, email: gardening.chignalsmashbury@gmail.com



The Gardening Club Plant Stand at the Village fete

(Shirley, Graham, Linda & Janet)

Bowls Club

Since the finish of the Chelmsford League program, where in our first year we finished a creditable 6th, just missing out on 5th by one point, we are now busy playing Friendlies against local Clubs, Pleshey, Great Waltham, Black Notley etc. The big event in the last month was the Pairs competition for the Mike Bell Trophy. Played on Saturday, May 30th, some very close matches saw Bill Knight and Roy Smith winning the final against Janet Campen and Audrey Smith. In the evening we all retired to "The Duck" at Newney Green for a enjoyable meal, where the portions were certainly not small.!

We continue to meet every Tuesday and Thursday night at 7.30pm until the Village Hall is no longer available due to the re-building.

Women's Institute

Our speaker for Thursday 6th August, 2.00pm for 2.30pm, will be 'Canine Partners'. Visitors welcome as usual.

On Saturday 22nd August 10am. our COFFEE MORNING will be at St. Marys Cottage, Coffee and Cake, Craft, Bring and Buy, Plants, do come and join us.

Community Matters

J's Hospice Cream Tea

Sandra, Yvonne and all the helpers would like to thank everyone who came along to enjoy tea, cake, cream teas and an opportunity to chat to friends and neighbours.

Through your generosity we have been able to send

£263.00

to the J's Hospice. Thank you

Fundraiser in aid of Children in Distress (Romania)

on Wednesday 12th August 2015 from 2-4 pm

at

No 1 Boundary Cottages, Chignal St James

There will be biscuits, cakes, scones sandwiches and nibbles, soft drinks, tea & coffee.

Please give a donation for the food and drink

Crafts and plants will be on sale and there will be a raffle.

Please contact Sylvia Lidbury on 441656 if you need more information

Fun at the Fete 2015

The 2015 village hall fete was held on the 6th of June at the village hall and playing field and raised over £2,400 for village hall funds.

Popular new events this year were the Scarecrow Competition, a Dress Up Your Dog Competition and a mini Produce and Craft Show, all of which attracted lots of entries and helped to raise awareness of the fete before the day itself. The children excelled themselves by producing some excellent entries for all of the competitive events, with 12 year old Jonathan Scott winning the 'Men Only' bake off with his lemon drizzle cake, beating off all of the adult competition. Geoff Pitts was runner up with a cherry and ginger cake. The Reynolds family in Chignal Smealey were the winners of the Adults/Family class in the Scarecrow Competition with their entry entitled 'Bradley Wiggins', while Sebastian and Barnaby Williams Leadbeater's entry 'TechnoGeek Boycrow' received the most votes in the children's category. The Dress Up Your Dog Show drew a large crowd around the arena and proved very entertaining; Sally Pavitt's pug, Toby, dressed in a flower fairy outfit, was declared the winner and received a certificate, a rosette and some dog treats.

The ever popular cream teas were served in and around the hall alongside the art exhibition, and the stalls and games were outside in the garden and on the playing field around the arena where visitors could enjoy the lovely views. The United Reformed Church attended with a display this year for the first time.

The good weather brought out the crowds who enjoyed a huge variety of outdoor games as well as stalls selling cakes, books, plants, bacon rolls, ice cream, bric a brac, honey and greetings cards alongside raffles, a wine lucky dip and tombola.

The village hall committee would like to thank all those individuals, organisations and businesses whose hard work and generosity made the fete so enjoyable and successful, and all those non committee members who put so much time and effort into organising, setting up and running stalls and games and generally helping with whatever needed to be done. There is never any shortage of work to be done and there were lots of extra willing hands this year.

Competition Results

Mini Craft and Produce Show Results:

Adult Categories:

Mini Garden in a Shoebox - Winner: Sharon Manning

Tastiest Strawberry - Winner Martyn Towns, Runner Up: Elaine Hinchliffe

Jar of home produced chutney, jam or jelly - Winner: Elaine Hinchliffe,(Red Tomato Chutney) Runner Up: Steve Middleditch (Plum Jelly)

Seasonal Salad Selection on a Plate - Winner: Sheila Evans

Prettiest cut flower display - Winner: Janet Campen, Joint Runner Up: Kate Middleditch and Sheila Evans

Best Looking Eggs - Winner: Sue Fincham, Runner Up: Mick Cater (right below)



Men Only Bake Off - Winner: Jonathan Scott (Lemon Drizzle) (above left), Runner Up: Geoff Pitts (Cherry and Ginger) (above middle)

Child Categories:

Decorated Homemade Biscuits - Winner: Alice Scott

Best home cooked cup cakes - Under 12 Winner: Sebastian Williams Leadbeatter,

Under 9 Winner: Barnaby Williams Leadbeatter

Handmade card - Under 12 Winner: William Nuttall, Under 9 Winner: Lucy Nuttall,

Under 7 Winner: Zoe Nuttall



Competition Results Continued

Scarecrow Competition Results:

Adult/Family category:

Winner: The Reynolds family with 'Bradley Wiggins'

2nd: Sue Lomas with 'Maria Scarecrova'

3rd: Sandra Bailey with 'The Poker Players'



And all the other entries: Sharon Manning 'The Rambler'; The Gardiner family 'Cycling Sally'; Mashbury Liveries 'Silly Scarecrow Pony Club'; David & Sue Fincham 'And All That Jazz'; Yvonne & Martyn Towns 'Anyone For Bowls?'; Gill & Dave Thomas 'Boy on a Swing';

Carolyn Anstey & Lesley Newell 'Loafing Around – Vera and Maud'; Kate Middleditch 'The Gardener'; The Hinchliffe family 'Buckethead Man'; Julia Emberton 'Enjoying the Gardening'; Joan & Norman Smith 'A Chip off the Old Block'; David Williams 'Gerroff!'; Janet Campen 'Scarecrow Nanny'; Owen Thomas 'Clean Bandit'; Steve Middleditch (on behalf of the Community Orchard) 'Core Blimey'; The Wheldon Family 'The Builder'; Malcolm & Irene Hindmarsh 'The Countryman'.

Children's category:

Winners: Sebastian and Barnaby Williams Leadbeater with 'Techno Geek Boycrow'

All the other entries:

Sam, Adam and Jonathan Scott and Alice Scott 'Scarecrow Bath Time'; Zoe Nuttall

'Winnie the Witch'; William & Lucy Nuttall 'Astro Armstrong'.



Competition Results Continued

Dress Up Your Dog Competition Results:

Winner: Toby the Pug dressed as a flower fairy, entered by Sally Pavitt

Runner up: Oakley 'the Lifeguard' Labrador entered by Lucy.

All the other entrants: Fergus the Jack Russell as a boxer, entered by Linda Nelson; Sam Scott's dog Poppy dressed as a lion; Daisy, a miniature long haired dachshund in a pink bonnet and coat, entered by the Caisleys and shown by Sue Lomas wearing a co-ordinating pink ensemble; Oscar, the Chapman family's Lakeland Cross, wearing a printed chiffon wrap; Eddie, dressed as Superman and shown by Flo Merrick and Daisy; and finally, Lucky the tiny terrier, owned and shown by Chloe (with a little help from dad).



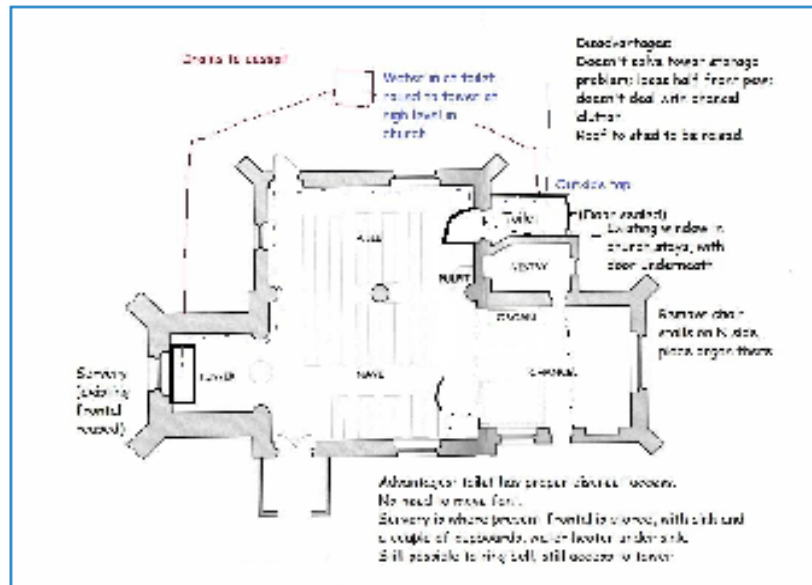
St Nicholas' Church, Chignal Smealy

This lovely little church is a gem, but lacks the basic facilities people now expect in any public building, a toilet and some facilities for making simple refreshments.

The lack of a toilet, in particular, is an embarrassment particularly when funerals, weddings and concerts are considered, and if the space is to be used for meetings, refreshment facilities are expected too. We want to show hospitality to walkers and riders and other visitors, as well as to those who come to use the building for meetings or concerts or worship.

The PCC is anxious that any alterations should not spoil the beauty of the church, and should not cause problems to our neighbours. We also want to avoid having to move the brick font which is such a feature of the church.

The cost of laying on water and providing drains, a new door to and a raised roof on the shed (which currently doesn't even have a floor!) mean that the alterations proposed would cost about £50,000.



It's a huge sum (which we haven't got) and there would have to be serious fundraising if it is decided to go ahead. It will only be possible if we can show the community supports it.

Please let us have your views as soon as possible, to revrosebraisby@btinternet.com, by post to Rev'd Rose Braisby, Oak House, Little Green, Chelmsford CM3 1BU, or we'll collect the reply forms in the next few weeks.

Thank you.

Rev Rose, for the PCC



Response

from.....

Contact

details.....

1 Do you agree that St Nicholas' Church, Chignal Smealy should have a toilet and servery installed on the basis indicated? Yes / No

2 Please give any particular reasons for your decision, or comments, overleaf or on a separate sheet.

3 Would you be prepared to join a fundraising team for this project if it goes ahead? Yes / No

Thank you for your reply.

Chignal Parish Council Meeting 11th March 2015

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CHIGNAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 11 MAY 2015 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Present:

Cllr. Mr. Chris Anstey, Cllr. Martyn Towns
Cllr. Miss Lynn Ballard (Chair), Cllr. Mr. Steve Middleditch, Cllr. Mr. Malcolm Feltwell

In Attendance:

Mrs. Janet Mills (Parish Clerk) and 8 Parishioners

1.0 Declarations of Acceptance of Office

The Clerk opened the meeting and advised that residing Members had duly signed their Acceptance Papers.

2. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

The Clerk asked Council Members for nominations for the role of Chairman, Cllr Feltwell proposed Cllr Lynn Ballard this was seconded by Cllr. Towns. With no objections Cllr Lynn Ballard was duly elected as Chairman.

The Chairman took the Chair and announced that she was delighted to again take on the role of Chairman and thanked Councillors for their support. The Chairman asked for nominations for the role of Vice Chairman, Cllr Ballard proposed Cllr Linda Nelson this was seconded by Cllr Towns. With no objections Cllr Linda Nelson was duly elected as Vice Chairman.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. Linda Nelson, Chignal Parish Council
Cllr Mrs Nicolette Chambers, Chelmsford City Council

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None recorded.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

a) A Member of the public gave details of a Concert to be held at St. Nicholas Church on Sunday 14 June and asked that those present advertise and support the event. It was noted that the afternoon performance was suitable for young people.

b) A Member of the public commented regarding the on-going problem of Gardening Express staff parking their cars outside Pieces cottage and asked when the situation was to be sorted out. This was causing damage to the road side verges, creating deep pot holes and making the passing places difficult to navigate. The meeting was advised that 14 cars had been parked on the verges recently. The Chairman advised that CCC Cllr Chambers and MP Alan Hazelhurst had met with owners of Pieces Cottage to see how the situation might be resolved. The outcome of the meeting is yet to be reported. With regard to the latest Planning appeal related to proposals to erect a large packing shed, CCC planning officers had advised that an inspector was to visit the site. The outcome/decision on the appeal is expected approximately five weeks after this visit. The PC had noted that a recent approval for a change of use from agriculture to storage at Chignal Hall Barns had included conditions that restricted the use of the building for distribution as this would generate unacceptable levels of traffic and activity which would be detrimental to residential amenity in accordance with policy DC4 and highway safety. In addition, no more than 20 Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) movements are to be made to or from the building per annum (an average of two per calendar month).

The Chairman advised that the PC was constantly pressing Local Authorities and other agencies to find a resolution to the nuisance and environmental damage associated with the operation of Gardening Express in the village. Cllr Aldridge advised that the Highways Department would give priority to pot holes in Chignal as they were fully aware of the ongoing situation. The Police Community Support Officer had advised at a recent village coffee morning that delivery lorries can park in the road in order to unload.

Chignal Parish Council continued

The Chairman agreed to write to the Divisional Commander of the Essex Police to ascertain what constituted unlawful obstruction and to Essex Fire and Rescue because of concerns raised by residents that emergency vehicles could be delayed by lorries obstructing the road. Questions were also raised as to whether this public nuisance constitutes anti-social behaviour.

6. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING 9th March 2015

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- a) **Parish Watch** – The matter of the Parish Watch scheme used by neighbouring parishes to inform residents of criminal activity in the area had been discussed with Police Community Support Officer, Gina Bennett who recommended that people in the Parish sign up to the Essex Community Messaging Service, which was provided by Essex Police. The service informed people regarding criminal activities in their local area. Members questioned whether the service would provide information quickly enough to local people. Information from the Farm Watch Scheme had been considered useful and it was suggested that the PC investigate whether a link to this service could be re-established. Members Agreed that an article seeking a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator be placed in the next Parish Newsletter.
- b) **Parish Plan**- The first Parish Plan workshop had been very successful and well attended. The RCCE would facilitate another meeting on Wednesday 27 May at 7.30pm in the Village Hall to assist in setting up a Steering Group. Everyone was welcome to attend. The RCCE had provided a £1,500 grant to the Parish Council to be used to develop the Parish Plan. The RCCE had agreed that development of the parish web site would

be an appropriate use for some of the funding. The Clerk advised that if the Parish Council is to retain responsibility for administering this funding, the Steering Group should be constituted as Committee of Parish Council with appropriate Terms of Reference.

- c) **Mashbury Governance Review** - The Chelmsford City Council (CCC) had advised that responses from the recent consultation process would be reviewed by 22 May. CCC would publish its preferred option for consultation between 22 May and 19 June after which the outcome would be determined by Full Council on 30 June 2015.
- d) **Notice Boards** – Regrettably there had been no further progress. Cllr Towns would make further attempts to contact the contractor, who had recently quoted to undertake the work.
- e) **The Triangle, Chignal Hall Lane** – An application had been forwarded to the Chelmsford Local Highways Panel. An assessment was to be carried out before the outcome could be decided.
- f) **Chignal Smealey Passing Places**- It had been agreed that the fixed bollards detailed in the original proposal would now be removable bollards so as to accommodate large farm vehicles. The funding for the passing places proposal was yet to be given approval from the Local Highways Panel.
- g) **Residential Development North of Copperfield Road**- The Chairman reported that despite requesting that this development be considered alongside the Persimmons Homes new access road and residential application, the Countryside residential scheme and a S.106 agreement had now been approved and work would be carried out in the summer to widen Hollow Lane. CCC Cllr Chambers would be asked for a report for the next meeting as she was unable to update the meeting at this time.

Chignal Parish Council continued

8. COUNTY AND CITY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cllr John Aldridge had advised that he would support the Chignal Smealey passing places proposal.

With regard to widening Hollow Lane, there had been no consultation with ECC Members. ECC must comply with the determinations of the CCC. Cllr Aldridge had asked for information regarding precisely what is being proposed and when the work was to be undertaken. It was suggested that the PC take before and after photos to ensure the work is undertaken to planning specification.

With regard to rural crime, following a meeting with Chief Inspector Cook attended by CPC Members, Cllr Aldridge had written a letter on 11 February setting out 12 questions but there had been no response. Further to this an email had been sent asking for a reply: again a response was awaited. Cllr Aldridge would continue to chase up the matter.

9. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Matters from the Chairman's report had been reported in previous items on this agenda. For that reason there was nothing further to report at this time.

10. TO REVIEW AND APPROVE CURRENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AND NEW LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Members had previously received papers giving details of all the Parish Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and other internal policies and procedures. Members noted the PC needed to ensure compliance to 3.5 of the financial regulations regarding the carrying over of unspent provisions to a subsequent year. The Clerk advised this could be undertaken at the annual budget meeting held each November. Other than this new arrangement, the policies and procedures were approved. The meeting was advised of a new legal

requirement to begin on 1 July 2015 for the Parish Council to publicise all papers including agenda, minutes, financial details and Councillor Information on its web site. To that end the Clerk would meet with Cllr Nelson to take the matter forward.

11. Community Grants

There were no applications to consider at this time.

12. JUBILEE ORCHARD COMMITTEE

a) Terms of Reference - With one slight amendment to reflect a prior decision to give some delegated budget approval to the Sub-Committee, the terms of reference were approved.

b) The minutes of the Orchard Sub-Committee meeting held 15 April were noted.

The meeting was advised that the VE picnic event held on the 10 May had been very well attended; children in particular had very much enjoyed the traditional games on the day.

13. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES

It was agreed that existing representatives would retain their existing positions and that newly appointed, Cllr Chis Anstey, would also undertake Gravel Liaison and Highways. Cllr Lynn Ballard and Cllr Steve Middleditch would undertake Neighbourhood/Village Watch for the time being.

14. REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS

a) Playing Fields

The Caravan Club had recently hired the playing field. The Clerk took receipt of £68.75 income from the Club for the use of the playing field.

b) Village Hall

The Grant Agreement was being looked at so that an Architect could be formally appointed. Project proposals would require planning permissions.

Chignal Parish Council continued

It was envisaged that the project would start at the latter end of this year and there would be a 5 month construction period.

c) **Newsletter Including Website**

Cllr Middleditch updated the meeting as to the progress of installation of super fast broad band. The meeting was advised that funding streams were particularly complex. Choices would need to be made as to which funding stream would be most beneficial to Chignal. Joining one particular scheme could result in not being able to take advantage from the benefits of other schemes running at the same time. Cllr Nelson would be asked to provide details of grants and funding available for booster stations to be placed in the village at the next meeting.

d) **Gravel Liaison**

Restoration was being undertaken on the site at the nearest point to the village. Noise screens had been removed which made the work very noisy. Investigations into the motorbikes being seen on the site would be undertaken. It had been agreed that Pengy Mill Lane would be put into good order as a bridle way, clarification regarding the ongoing responsibility for this was required. Parish Councillors and local residents had been invited to walk the site in the summer; Cllr Aldridge would be invited to join Members.

e) **Village Watch** - was reported earlier in the meeting.

f) **Highways**

There remained an issue with the gully and piped ditch near to the Three Elms Public House. The Highways department was yet to assess and address the situation. This would need to be resolved in the summer months so as to avert problems of flooding next winter.

g) **Footpaths/Bridleways**- Details of the Parish Walks were awaited.

h) **Telephone Box**

Restoration had begun and help to prepare the box for painting was welcomed. Cllr Feltwell proposed and Cllr Middleditch seconded the motion that £35.91 be approved for the cost of the paints. With no objections the motion was carried.

c) **Tree Warden**

Cllr. Ballard and Mrs Moira Tarrant, the Mashbury Tree Warden, had accepted an invitation to give a presentation on how the Jubilee Orchard project had been developed to Local Tree Wardens at the Chelmsford Civic Centre on 13 May.

12.0 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Persimmons Homes/Countryside Homes proposed developments North Melbourne and Hollow Lane were discussed. Concerns were raised that these companies were not working together to ensure proper access between the two developments. Other concerns included the lack of footpaths, cycle ways and bridleways. It was noted that 136 houses of the development fell into the Chignal catchment area, for this reason a Community Infrastructure Levy would apply. It was agreed that a representative of Countryside Homes be invited to give a presentation and answer questions at the PC meeting in July and that a meeting with CCC planners be arranged for parish councillors.

Decisions noted

Decisions as set out on the agenda were duly noted.

New Planning Applications

15/00366FUL the Thatched Cottage, Chignal Road Chignal Smealy- Two storey side extension and single story rear extension. To meet the planning timetable Members of the Parish Council had considered the application prior to the meeting, the following comments had been submitted.

Chignal Parish Council continued

'The Chignal Villages Design Statement (VDS) requires extensions to be sympathetic to the property and in harmony with the surroundings. Extensions should relate to the original building in terms of rhythm, materials and form. In addition extensions should not unduly affect adjoining residents or result in the urbanisation of the street scene.

The proposed extensions to The Thatched Cottage appear to fit largely with the VDS guidelines but we would wish to endorse the detailed comments of the Listed Building Officer regarding the unduly bulky and prominent dormers in the two storey extension and the recommendation that the front elevation should use a single, central window. In addition we would concur that it would be preferable to use a pitched roof or a low green roof on the rear extension'.

13.0 FINANCE

The Clerk reported as follows:

- a) A paper showing the end of year balances had been previously circulated. A note of thanks was given to Mr. Graham Randall the PC Internal Auditor who had kindly had given up his time to review and agree the End of Year Balance. Year end balances 2014 – 2015 were as follows:
Community Account - £2,783.62,
Business Account - £3,238.10, balance brought forward £6,021.72.
Members had also received a paper detailing the Orchard Committee delegated budget accounts for 2013-14 and 2014-15. The closing balance on the account of £616.34 was noted and agreed after a short discussion.
- b) **Cheques issued since the last meeting:**
The following was noted: Balances on the accounts at the 6 May were **XXX**
EALC affiliation fee £93.02; Chelmsford DBF, printing the May Newsletter £66.37; Paint for Telephone Box £35.91.
- c) **Official Notice of Accounts**
It was noted that the Official Notice of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2015 had been posted on parish notice

boards. The Clerk advised that the accounts were available between 8 May and 5 June should anyone wish to make an appointment to see them.

- d) **Audit Commission Financial Return**
A second note of thanks was given to Mr Graham Randall, the internal auditor, who at short notice, had reviewed and approved the Clerks completed Financial Return for the year ended 31 March 2015. Cllr Ballard proposed and Cllr Towns seconded a motion that the End of year Accounts and Financial Return be approved by the Council. With no objections the motion was carried.
- e) **Precept Award**
It was noted that the PC had requested to receive £5,700 precept for this year. Precepts were yet to be confirmed.
- f) **Additional Cheque Book Signatories.**
After short discussion, Cllr Ballard proposed and Cllr Towns seconded a motion that Cllr Chris Anstey would become a cheque book signatory. With no objections the motion was carried. The Clerk would make the necessary arrangements for this and would check on the status of the application for the Clerk to have permissions to get a balance on the accounts by telephone.
16. **CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION**
Members of the PC had been invited to attend the Annual Civic Service to be held on Sunday 7th June 2015 at the Cathedral. After a short discussion it was agreed that Cllr Feltwell and Cllr Middleditch would attend. The Clerk circulated a number of community papers for information.
17. **LATE AND URGENT BUSINESS**
Cllr Lynn Ballard advised that she would not be available for the next meeting. It was agreed that the date would not be changed and that Cllr Nelson would be asked to undertake the Chairman role. There being no other urgent business meeting closed at 9.30pm
18. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
Monday July 13th at 7.30pm in the Village

Hadleigh Park Opened to the Public



Since London 2012, Essex County Council, along with Active Essex, have been developing Hadleigh Park into a world class sporting venue with its Olympic mountain bike courses at its heart. This great sporting legacy opened on 29th April and now incorporates with the bike trails, a 400 space car park, a café, bike shop and an outdoor children's play area. A must for the burgeoning numbers of off road cyclists of all standards.

Whilst on the subject of cycling, beginners and advanced riders may wish to take advantage of free "Bikeability" tuition, which is being facilitated by Braintree District Council and Essex County Council at Great Notley Country Park every Saturday morning, starting at 9.30am. These "Bikeability" sessions are government approved and overseen by the Department for Transport and are open to all especially those who may have rediscovered their enthusiasm for cycling.

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Essex "Gritters" Stand Down

Summer officially began on Sunday 5th April, and this is when winter gritting crews stood down to take a well-earned break. During the last six months the crews carried out 85 separate countywide salting operations, spreading some 18,000 tonnes over the 2,000 miles of Essex's priority roads.

Although it was not the snowiest winter, the crews were out every night due to some particularly cold temperatures. The gritting crews begin again next winter on 27th October.

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Be Aware of Deer

With spring well underway, motorists should be wary of one of the season's least known driving hazards – Deer! About 40,000 deer collisions occur every year in the UK, causing some 350 human injuries. So when driving take note of deer warning signs and drive with extra caution on country roads where deer collisions are more likely to happen. After dark, use full-beam and dim them on sight of a deer but don't over-swerve to avoid hitting a deer. Report all deer collisions to the police.

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If you have any problems concerning County Council matters please let me know on 01245 421524 or email cllr.john.aldridge@essex.gov.uk

John Aldridge CC May - June 2015

St Nicholas Church Concerts

The two performances on 14th June by Nightingale Ensemble and Verica Grmusa, were both well attended and enjoyed by the audiences. A total of £2604 has been added to Church funds from donations, raffle and concert ticket sales. Many thanks to the many people who, both before and on the day, put much effort and enthusiasm into making the event a success.

Nigel Bevitt-Smith

Some photos from the concert are below



St. Nicholas' Church

What a lovely evening, the taste and sound and scent of summer – beautiful music in wonderful surroundings, old friends and new ones met, Prosecco and strawberries and cream under a canopy on the cricket ground – ah, bliss! The concert was fabulous, and the church (full of flowers) looked and sounded and smelled wonderful. Apart from thanking all those who worked so hard to make it all look effortless, we really should be grateful that we have such idyllic surroundings and such a great church building for use for concerts and meetings and so on.

Churches do really need basic facilities, though, and I know people have been wondering for years about installing them in St Nicholas' Church. You will I hope find a questionnaire with this News, and we'd love to have your feedback and any comments as soon as possible. You can also download the form from the Chignals Website at <http://www.essexinfo.net/thechignals/chignal-diary/>.

A similar discussion had been going on about Ford End Church for at least the last 15 years, and finally the bullet has been bitten, and a toilet and small servery are being installed. Think of the relieved wedding guests and funeral-goers (and clergy!) As the mother of one bride said when told that the nearly-finished loo would be available for her daughter's wedding – hallelujah!

These additions are not cheap (think c.£50K if you haven't got water and drains already, and we haven't), but they make the church so much more practical for meetings and concerts and visiting walkers, riders and cyclists, as well as for the regular congregations. It's basic hospitality, really.

Churches were always meant to be community assets for everyday use, as well as for worship. Do make a point of looking inside St Nicholas if you haven't done so lately, it is beautiful. People are always welcome as visitors as well as to services.

That's the thing about the C of E – it's for everyone in England, regardless. So Rev'd Caroline is vicar to absolutely everyone in the parish, in good times and in bad. Let us know if we can help with either, won't you?

With every blessing,

Rev Rose

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