



*Great Braxted  
Parish Council*

**Annual Report 2019/20**

## **Chairman's Report – Councillor Ken Hornett – April 2020**

It is strange writing these notes knowing that there will not be a meeting for people to attend should they want to. The Coronavirus is causing so many cancellations, changes to routines, etc., etc.

The main purpose of this Report is to provide a brief summary of the activities of the Parish Council over the last twelve months. We are a relatively small village (only 286 persons on the latest Electoral Roll) and a Parish Council of only five elected members, plus the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. We normally meet only six times a year, but can and do hold extraordinary meetings usually for urgent matters such as planning applications where time is of the essence. This has happened during this year.

I would like to say how grateful I am for the support of my fellow Parish Councillors, so a big THANK YOU to: Iain Armstrong; Richard Collins; Lee Kane and Craig Knapman. Well done gentlemen. We are all volunteers and do not receive any payment.

Also, we are very fortunate to have such an efficient and professional Parish Clerk. Sarah Gaeta has filled in very well and is a great asset to the Parish Council.

This year we have also been supported by our District Councillor, Richard Siddall who attends our meetings (when we have them!). He is on Maldon District Council and also on Little Totham Parish Council.

We now have full access to electronic media and all details of Parish Council meetings, activities, news, etc., are on our website. There is the Braxted Residents Facebook page, the monthly Braxted Bulletin and even the good old noticeboard.

As far as the last year is concerned the major event in the village was the bi-annual Braxted Fete which this time included a car boot fair. The day was very successful and with the subsequent Giant Quiz in Braxted Park the Fete Committee raised a record £11,000 +. One third of which was been sent to each church, St Nicholas in Little Braxted and All Saints. The final third is earmarked for community use/projects of Great Braxted. It is currently deposited in the bank account of Great Braxted Parish Council.

On the subject of finance, it should be mentioned that any expenditure has to be agreed by the Council and any two councillors are required to be signatories. The Clerk is responsible for financial matters but is not a signatory to the account.

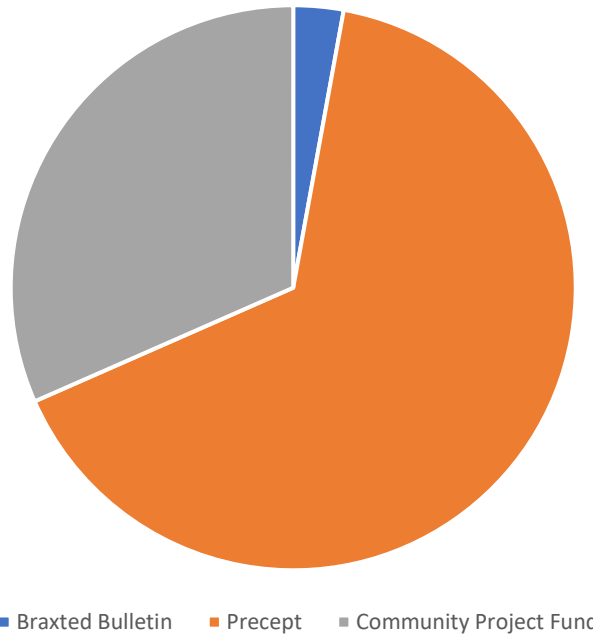
We supported the annual village clean up as we have done for many years. This was in March 2020 and again was successful.

It is normal at the Annual Parish Council Meeting to select a Chairman for the coming year. It had been my intention to stand down as Chairman but to remain a councillor, thus giving one of the other Councillors the opportunity to take over the reins. However, due to the fact that all meetings are suspended at present I will have to stay in office until such time as the pandemic crisis is eased. It is possible that a change in law may allow some meetings to take place using electronics systems such as video conferencing or similar.

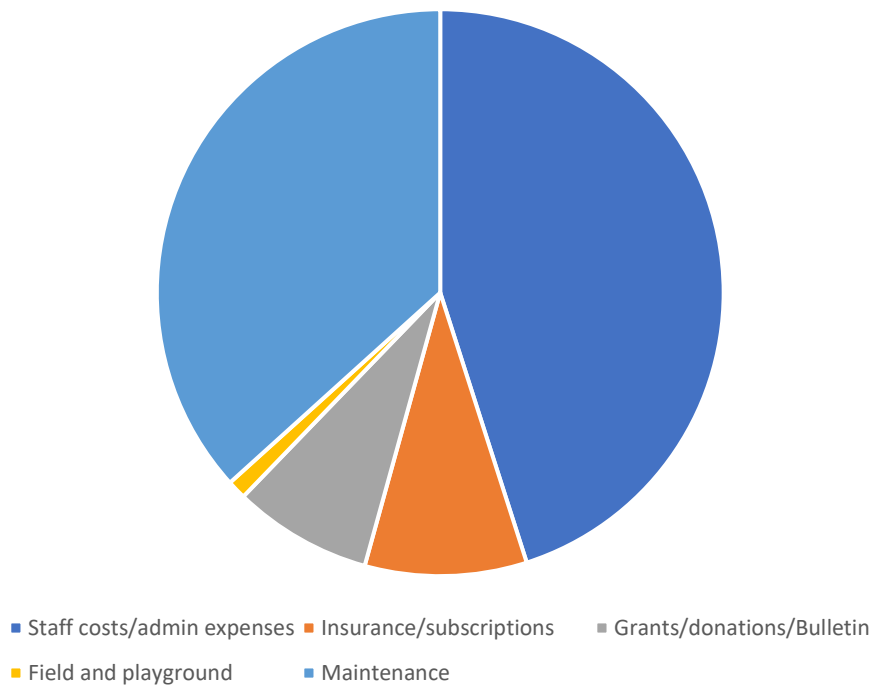
I am sure that I may have missed something from this summary, if so my apologies.

## Finance Report – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Great Braxted Parish Council Income 2019/20



Great Braxted Parish Council Expenditure 2019/20



## Income Breakdown 2019/20

	£
Precept	8,000.00
Community Project Fund (ring fenced)	3,855.47
Braxted Bulletin	350.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,205.47</b>
<b>TOTAL (excluding ring fenced funds)</b>	<b>8,350.00</b>

## Expenditure Breakdown 2019/20

	£
Staff costs/admin expenses	2,246.59
Insurance/subscriptions	460.48
Grants/donations/Bulletin	395.16
Field and playground	54.00
Maintenance	1,829.31
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,985.54</b>

## **Maldon District Councillor Report – Richard Siddall**

The past year has been an interesting experience for me, and it has been challenging and fulfilling. As some of you may know, it has also been at times frustrating, and personally testing and trying. On the whole and especially when working with residents, it has been hugely enjoyable, rewarding and satisfying.

It has been great to engage with the community and to serve and assist in the needs of the ward. My approach has been to be as proactive and active as possible. Over the past few years, residents have become frustrated by a lack of response and engagement. To ensure that changed, if someone contacts me via email, I respond to them within 24 hours, returning calls as soon as possible.

I have also endeavoured to keep residents informed by writing the monthly updates in the Parish Newsletter. In addition to increase engagement, I have posted information and updates on the Facebook page Totham Matters. This also gives the opportunity to provide information at the time it is announced.

In addition, I have been holding bi-monthly surgeries in the ward and these have proved to be popular; this enables someone to meet face to face. I will continue to run these across the ward. These may be combined with other representatives and the police service.

I hope to be able to get to as many of the community events in the village over the summer, once the coronavirus crisis has been overcome.

I have helped support residents with planning issues and enquiries, road safety issues and traffic. Where I haven't been able to directly help, I have given them advice as to who to and where to go to.

Over the past year I have progressed some of the highway problems in Great Braxted, and these have all moved forward for consultation.

We have had the Heybridge garden village outline permission get passed, which we need to consider for the future and how it impacts on Great Braxted, especially any increased traffic. We have had speculative housing applications again, which the current 5-year land supply protects from happening.

I have learnt a huge amount about Maldon District Council since being elected and its needs and requirements. The organisation has just gone through a major change which at times has caused issues for the employees and the process. This caused a major delay to the end of year accounts. It also affected staff moral and motivation, and a resulting under resourcing. This has then caused delay in meeting the needs of the residents. I am hoping that the next year will provide some more stability and an increase in resources.

The coronavirus has resulted in the council changing the way it operates in the emergency. It will also create further challenges for the organisation for the foreseeable future. The council is endeavouring to operate remotely, whilst still servicing the needs of the residents.

There is far more opportunity to self-serve when accessed, which is progressive, but we need to ensure that those who do not use the internet, who are often the most vulnerable, can still access services.

I have tried to help in ensuring the council makes sensible decisions, and that we address the future of the barge operators and MYC. There are new proposals coming forward, which will provide long term solutions. We need to protect our community and heritage.

Working with the neighbourhood plan team in Great Totham, we are progressing the implementation of a Dart bus service, so that we are able to provide a bus direct link to the hospital. This type of service is a mixture of taxi and bus, where it can be requested to stop at your home. I hope that it will also serve Great Braxted.

Having met with the Essex Community Policing team at MDC last week, they are happy to engage with the community and I am scheduling when they will come to a Parish Council meeting. We also need to get more presence on the streets, and this is something I discussed with them.

Bradwell B is now at the first consultation stage and if you have a concern it is very important that you complete the survey. If this goes ahead it will have a major impact on the area, and we need to ensure that the council exploits any opportunities and at the same time mitigates any of the problems.

There is also a consultation into air quality in the town centre; we need to ensure that we have the right solutions. I think that the solutions for this are very simple and it is being over complicated, as we are after all a rural area.

It has been very good to assist the Parish Council over the past year and I look forward to the next few years. After spending time catching up with issues that hadn't been addressed for a while, it now gives the opportunity to identify other needs and actions. I will also continue to provide support and assistance with residents.

District Councillor Richard Siddall

## Note from the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

The Annual Assembly would have been the perfect opportunity for me to introduce myself to the village. However, due to the current pandemic restrictions, the Annual Assembly will unfortunately not take place in 2020. Therefore, I have added this note to the Annual Report.

I would like to thank Great Braxted Parish Council for making me welcome as the new Clerk and RFO from September 2019. I would also like to thank the previous Clerk and RFO, Sarah Mann, who has been very helpful to me.

During my time in post, I have set up a Great Braxted Parish Council Facebook page to provide updates from the Parish Council, Maldon District Council and Essex County Council, plus any other relevant information for the village. Please follow @greatbraxtedpc to see these updates in your newsfeed.

Following the closure of our previous website platform, I have created a new website which can be viewed at <https://e-voice.org.uk/greatbraxtedparishcouncil/>. It is updated regularly with news, agendas, minutes and more, including local weather and travel information.

Finally, should you wish to contact me, please call 07307 891134 (feel free to leave a message and I will return your call when next at my desk), or email [greatbraxtedpc@gmail.com](mailto:greatbraxtedpc@gmail.com). Parish Councillor contact details can be found on our website.

