

# RINGMER PARISH COUNCIL

## March 2008 Newsletter

Chairman  
Mr. A. R. Peters, MBE  
Plashett Park Farm,  
Ringmer BN8 5SJ

*Published by* **Ringmer Parish Council**

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### **RINGMER PARISH COUNCIL**

*This is an invitation to your*  
**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
To be held at the Village Hall on  
**Thursday 3 April at 7.30 p.m.**

**Speaker: Mr J M Ticehurst**  
**(Borough Commander, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service)**  
**'The Modern Fire & Rescue Service'**

### **Introduction**

This is the second quarterly newsletter issued by the Council and is being circulated to all households as it contains details of the Annual Parish Meeting which it is hoped many of you will attend. The other newsletters for 2008 (June, September and December) will be available for collections from Mc Colls, the Library, Ringmer Surgery and the Village Hall. They will also be available on the Council's website.

### **Chairman's Message**

In May last year new Council elections were held. For the first time in a number of years there were more candidates than places available and the level of interest was encouraging. The new Council remains committed to pursuing the interests of the whole community and continues to focus particularly on housing, employment, transport and environmental issues. It is also seeking Quality Council status and is embarking on a series of steps to achieve it by the end of 2008 and the introduction of quarterly newsletters is an aspect of this. This particular newsletter will mainly summarise key points from the Council's annual report for 2007/08; a full copy of which will be circulated at the Annual Parish Meeting and made available at the Library, the Council office and on the website.

As ever the Council is grateful to those whose voluntary efforts greatly assist its work. Edwina Morris has worked particularly hard to increase the range of information available on the website to help our drive for Quality Council status. Bert Harwood continues to turn out to collect litter and is greatly deserving of our thanks and Dick Davis continues to keep a weather eye on the allotments.

Sadly I have to report that the year has also been marked by the loss of Brian Cruttenden who for many years volunteered to clear litter and was a great friend of the village. Brian will be greatly missed.

### **Play Area Improvements**

Over the last year £51,000 has been spent upgrading play areas and a further £29,400 spent on upgrading the path across the Green. All this has been paid for by a developer's contribution and was not a charge on our Council Tax.

### **Affordable Housing**

The first meeting has been held with Hastoe Housing Association and other parties regarding the development of two pairs of semi-detached dwellings in Potato Lane for rent to Ringmer connected people. Outline proposals are being prepared for public consultation for a pair of two-bedroom and a pair of three-bedroom properties. Once these have been considered by Council a consultation event will be organised.

### **Traffic calming and parking**

We remain indebted to RADAR for their time and effort in keeping traffic speeds down. For its part Council is awaiting the installation of the vehicle activated signs it has agreed to fund. It has also campaigned to improve the safety of The Forges roundabout and negotiated with the County Council the introduction of limited parking and additional yellow lines in key locations.

### **Access to the countryside**

For a third year kissing gates have been installed to improve access to a number of paths. During 2008 all the paths between The Broyle and the centre of the village will be covered as well as the path from the churchyard to the A26. A start will also be made on installing gates on the path from Gote Lane to the Mill Post and this will be finished in 2009. The co-operation of landowners and farmers has been much appreciated.

### **Law and order**

The reaction to deployment of a second Police Community Support Officer has been favourable and Council will

continue to make financial provision for this. Vandalism has been a problem and damage to bus shelters alone has cost in the region of £5,000. This is covered by insurance but has caused great inconvenience to bus users. A positive step is a police proposal to create a non-street drinking zone in the centre of the village. When details have been worked up there will be public consultation on this.

### Planning matters

Over the last year around 90 planning applications have been considered and recommendations made to Lewes District Council. These range from small extensions through to major applications such as the wind turbine and the result of the public enquiry for this is now awaited.

Planning is also a strategic activity and much work directed by Cllr. John Kay has gone into considering the future needs of the village. An Employment Plan was published in May 2006 and Council's draft 'Strategy for Residential Development 2006 – 2026' will be the subject of public consultation soon. As things stand the regional housing allocation for Lewes District is at the lower end of expectations and Council will strongly resist further 'greenfield' development in the village. The proposed extensions of the boundary of the National Park around Ringmer are broadly welcomed by Council given they will offer additional protection of the landscape bordering a large part of the village.

### Financial Information

For 2007/08 Council set a net budget of £82,342. This was financed by a Council Tax precept of £75,897 and supplemented by £6,445 from reserves. Council has also benefited from developer's contributions from large local housing developments to fund play area and recreational improvements. In 2007/08 £80,400 was received from this source.

Looking to 2008/09 Council has set a net budget of £85,299. The precept has been set at £77,794, an increase of 2.5% and it is planned to supplement this with £7,505 from reserves.

## RINGMER'S CURRENT COUNCILLORS

PARISH COUNCILLORS: Chairman : Mr. A. R. Peters - Plashett Park Farm

Vice-Chairman & Chairman of Planning Committee: Dr. J. E. Kay - "Fair Meadow", Rushey Green.

Chairman of General Purposes Committee: Mr. P. Longhurst – Dart Cottage, The Elms

Chairman of Greens Committee: Mr R. Wilcox – 5 Gote Lane

Mrs E Pitts – Chanctonbury, Broyle Lane

Mr. R.B. Truman – 1 Cheyney Cottages, Lewes Road

Mr. A. J. Grindley - 25 Springett Avenue.

Ms. P. Lewis – 3 East View Cottages, Harrison's Lane

Mrs. V. C. Humphrey - 26 Oakmede Way.

Mr. K. White – Celandines, Bishops Lane.

Mrs. J. Fordham – 53 Broyleside Cottages, Broyle Lane

Mrs. J. Woollons – 36 Christie Avenue.

Mr I Wilson – Dorian, Rushey Green

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS: Mr C A Bowers, Mr P Gander, Mr P Gardiner;

COUNTY COUNCILLOR: Mrs R St. Pierre

The table below gives an overview of the main areas of the Council's budgeted expenditure for 2007 - 2008. Although the net budget was set at £82,342 income and funds set aside for specific purposes mean that the approved expenditure budget for 2007/08 is actually £86,210 of which the list below represents the significant items.

Main Expenditure Items	£
Staff	33,860
Office & General Administration	5,805
Audit & Insurance Fees	4,425
Grants to Organisations	3,500
Maintenance of grounds, (the Green, the Pond, Anchor Field, Fingerpost Field and others) including grass cutting, tree maintenance etc	8,101
Play area maintenance, inspections etc	3,670
Contribution to Police Community Support Officer costs	10,000
Election costs	3,000
Maintenance of Old Churchyard & War Memorial	2,570
Emptying of dog bins	2,000
Allotments – grass cutting, water charge, lease	705
Footpaths – maintenance & installation of kissing gates	1,300
Rent for Anchor Field and Broyle Close play area	500
Rent for office and meeting accommodation	2,625
Other sundry expenditures	4,149
<b>Total</b>	<b>86,210</b>

### Promotion of locally produced food and produce

At a time when issues of healthy eating and 'food miles' are to the fore the Council is keen to promote any local businesses and organisations that are selling locally produced food and produce. In its next newsletter it would like to include a list of all those involved and if you wish your business or organisation to be included please let the Clerk have contact and opening details and a brief description of the type of food/produce. There will be no charge for entries.

## COUNCIL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Full Council and Planning Meetings are held respectively on the second and fourth Thursdays of most months at 7.30 p.m. in the St. Mary's Room, Ringmer Village Hall and Committee Meetings on some other Thursdays. The Clerk can provide full details.