

# RINGMER PARISH COUNCIL

## March 2009 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 2 April at 7.30 p.m.**

**Speaker: A representative from the Sussex Air Ambulance Service**

#### **Introduction**

This quarterly newsletter is being circulated to all households as it contains details of the Annual Parish Meeting. Other editions in June, September and December can be collected at McColls, the Library, the Surgery and the Village Hall and are also on the above website (which also contains the fuller Annual Report).

We have also delivered a consultation about the proposed No Cold Calling Zone over which your feedback will be welcome.

#### **Chairman's Message**

The Council has had another busy year of involvement in all spheres of local activity and has addressed matters of safety, security and welfare as well as the main issues of housing, employment, transport and the environment.

This year has also seen our successful attempt at achieving Quality Council status, an award which recognises that this Council is well organised and provides a good service to its community. Possessing this status may bring the potential to take on new powers and to collaborate with other authorities, enabling greater local input over the delivery of some of your services. I am particularly grateful to Nick Hall our previous Parish Clerk for all his hard work and dedication which ensured that we would succeed, and to Edwina Morris who continues to provide an invaluable website which puts necessary information at residents' fingertips.

#### **Affordable Housing**

This parish will hopefully soon be seeing the development of 2 pairs of small semi-detached dwellings in Potato Lane. Following a recent consultation exhibition which drew favourable remarks about the buildings' design, the planning application by Hastoe Housing Association is anticipated shortly.

#### **Traffic calming and parking**

To improve highway safety and residents' and shoppers' convenience, limited period parking is currently being introduced, particularly in Broyle Lane and at the shopping area. This will hopefully encourage more considerate parking that particularly respects the needs of disabled and elderly

people. The vehicle-activated 30mph signs have been introduced at Council's expense to persuade traffic to particularly keep to the speed limit on the approaches to our schools.

Council supports the work of RADAR which has this year conducted a detailed local survey. This identified residents' main concerns as being speeding, heavy vehicles, the need for crossings at the Community College and Harrison's Lane junction, pedestrian safety and the need for better parking facilities. Following the recent fatal accident on The Broyle, a petition is being collected and approaches will be made to ESCC with a view to achieving improvements to this treacherous stretch of road.

#### **Access to the countryside**

A lot of resources have again been devoted to improving the parish's footpaths and more kissing gates have been introduced - continuation of the programme is intended this year.

A new permissive path between New Road and Saxon Cross is hopefully also about to be introduced and many thanks are due to Mr Christie the landowner and Mr Loughborough the initiator.

#### **Law and order**

Council contributes substantially towards the cost of a second Police Community Support Officer, and the PCSOs are regarded as a welcome addition, helping to reduce problems in the area. A local Neighbourhood Panel has been established by the Police on which the Parish Council is represented and this has decided that currently the 3 main priorities for action should be antisocial behaviour, litter and inconsiderate parking. Dog litter is a continuing concern - despite the provision and emptying of special bins at Council's expense, some people are still not cleaning up after their pets and must be persuaded to act in a more neighbourly and responsible manner.

Proposals to introduce a No Public Drinking zone in the centre of the village remain under consideration - any views expressed will be forwarded on to the District Council.

## Planning matters

Over the last year around 60 planning applications have been considered and recommendations made to Lewes District Council. These range from small extensions through to major applications, and Council has also had to consider early consultations on proposals such as a possible reservoir at Clay Hill and the route and details of a cycleway to Lewes. Early 2008 saw a public inquiry into the Glyndebourne proposal for a wind turbine on Mill Plain. Following a ministerial decision, a temporary mast has been erected and we must await the outcome of wind-flow tests.

Planning is also a strategic activity and much work has gone into considering the future needs of the village. An Employment Plan was published in May 2006 and consultation over Council's draft 'Strategy for Residential Development 2006 – 2026' is currently being organised. As things stand the regional housing allocation for Lewes District is at the lower end of expectations and Council will strongly resist further 'greenfield' market housing development. Plans to move Ringmer F.C. to a new site near the Community College and to develop other leisure facilities there have made little progress, particularly since a prospective developer had hoped to finance them by also building hundreds of houses there.

The proposed extensions to 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 2008/09 Council set a gross expenditure budget of £88,620, partly reduced by income and other items to a net budget of £85,299. This was financed by a Council Tax Precept of £77,794 and supplemented by £7,505 from reserves. The latter covered 75% of the cost of an additional PCSO, as discussed and agreed at the 2008 Annual Parish Meeting. This was a "one-off" subsidy and the cost of this additional resource for the village must be covered by precept in future years.

The table below gives an overview of the main areas of the Council's budgeted expenditure for 2008-09. Before taking

into account the benefit of income and funds set aside for specific purposes, the approved expenditure budget for 2008/09 is £88,620, of which the details below represent the significant items.

Looking to 2009/10, Council has set a gross expenditure budget of £89,258, which will be reduced by the benefit of income and other items to £86,724. The precept has been set at £83,630, an increase of 7.5% and it is planned to supplement this with £3,094 from reserves. While this increase is higher than the inflation rate, this is largely to reset the budget baseline to include the PCSO costs referred to above, and the precept still only represents 2.7% of overall Council Tax.

<b>Main Expenditure Items 2008-09</b>	<b>£</b>
Staff, including employer overheads	36,481
Office & General Administration	5,694
Audit & Insurance Fees	4,640
Grants to Organisations	3,500
Maintenance of grounds, (the Green, the Pond, Anchor Field, Fingerpost Field and others) including grass cutting, tree maintenance etc	9,520
Play area maintenance, inspections etc	3,800
Contribution to Police Community Support Officer costs	10,250
Maintenance of Old Churchyard & War Memorial	2,655
Emptying of dog bins	2,060
Allotments – grass cutting, water charge, lease	725
Footpaths – maintenance & installation of kissing gates	1,310
Rent for Anchor Field and Broyle Close play areas	500
Rent for office and meeting accommodation	2,750
Other sundry expenditures	4,735
<b>Total</b>	<b>88,620</b>

## RINGMER'S 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, Harrisons 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

## COUNCIL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Full Council and Planning Committee 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.