

DETLING PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT



2014/2015

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS
May 2014 to May 2015

Irene Bowie	Co-Opted	2011
John Clayton	Co-Opted	2013
Michael Denny	Co-Opted	2008
Chris Evernden	Co-Opted	2011
Steve Griffiths	Co-Opted	2013
Mark Housden - Chairman	Elected	2003
Janice Kennard - Vice Chairman	Elected	2003

CLERK TO THE PARISH COUNCIL	Mrs Sherrie Babington 01634 - 867173 www.detlingparish.co.uk
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MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT	Hugh Robertson MP
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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL COUNCILLOR	Cllr Jenny Whittle
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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCILLOR	Cllr Nick de Wiggondene
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COMMUNITY POLICE	PSCO Megan Day
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LOCAL PRESS REPRESENTATIVE	Miss Jenny Cosgrove
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SOLICITORS	Gulland & Gulland, Maidstone
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BANKERS	Co-Operative
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AUDITORS	Little John
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INSURANCE	Allianz Cornhill Insurance
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Photographs: Lydia Sait

Front cover:	Detling Church
Back cover:	The Cock Horse

CHAIRMANS REPORT

This has been a year of ups and downs for Detling Parish Council; a year of frustration and fulfilment in equal measure.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of the council was that we finally 'persuaded' Kent County Council to solve the problem of the flooding at the junction of the A249 and Church Lane. The provision of new drains and a soak away has been a great success although the area of land cleared for the soak away has provided a focal point for some anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping, hopefully now cured by the strategic placement of some logs from Horish Wood along the edge of the carriageway. Church Lane was also resurfaced; in fact it was resurfaced twice as the first attempt was wholly inadequate.

Our attention has now turned again to the issue of rat-running and speeding through the village. The latest news on this issue is that Kent Highways are looking at altering the junction of the A249 southbound and Pilgrims' Way to discourage drivers entering the village at that point. They also plan to make the village 'access only' through a Prohibition of All Motorised Vehicles Order and are looking at the possibility of putting measures in to reduce the speed of vehicles in Hockers Lane. This is perhaps the most frustrating issue faced by the village and the parish council at the moment but we will keep working with KCC to find a suitable, workable, affordable solution.

2014 of course marked the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War and the council marked the occasion by organising a coach trip to the Battlefields of Ypres, Belgium. Sites visited included the preserved German trenches of Bayernwald, Tyne Cot Cemetery (a site of fierce fighting in 1917 during the Battle of Passchendaele and now a cemetery containing the graves of over 11,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers), the German Cemetery at Langemarck and Essex Farm Cemetery (where the Canadian doctor John McCrae wrote the poem In Flanders Fields).

After a day of excellent weather the evening in Ypres saw a torrential downpour, but the skies cleared in time for the group's attendance at the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate. The council also arranged for the area around the War Memorial in Detling to be tidied up and laid a wreath there during the village's annual Remembrance Service.

The council continues to look after what are arguably the village's greatest assets; Horish Wood, Monk's Meadow and the Old School Playing Field. Coppicing of the wood started this year, in line with the management plan drawn up by the Forestry Commission. The work was undertaken by the Kent Woodland Employment Scheme, an excellent organisation which combines a commercial role with training young people who need to develop new skills and obtain worthwhile employment and qualifications. Horish Wood continues to provide a lovely amenity for the village, especially dog walkers, and recently it was visited by a group of A Level Biologists from Oakwood Park Grammar School for part of their studies. Monk's Meadow meanwhile is becoming increasingly used as a dog walking area and a place to retreat to for a relaxing time and the Playing Field has provided a popular addition to the village hall's portfolio and a pleasant place to enjoy a view across the fields.

In addition to these open spaces the council continues to keep an interest in the Scragged Oak Viewpoint and future developments at White Horse Wood. At one time it was possible that we would join Stockbury and Thurnham councils in taking a greater interest in the running of White Horse Wood but we decided we could not commit the man hours and finances needed.

We are committed to keeping the village as tidy as possible and to carry on planting in containers and on verges around the village. In conjunction with the Fire Service the council cleared foliage from around the hydrant markers throughout the village (some of which had not been seen for many years) and in March a group of students from Oakwood Park Grammar School worked all day on clearing vegetation from Jade's

Crossing, painting the council's notice boards and litter picking in Pilgrims' Way opposite the village hall and in Church Lane. Despite our best efforts to keep the village tidy fly-tipping remains a major concern and we work closely with Maidstone Borough Council to ensure the rubbish is reported and cleared as quickly as possible.

The parish continues to have a voice on many external agencies; the A249 Action Group (campaigning for a roundabout outside the showground and a 50mph speed limit on the entirety of the road) and the Joint Parishes Group (campaigning to keep development in the area appropriate and not detrimental to the rural setting) being prominent amongst them. An area of concern is in our dealings with the police; we are continually urging them to provide a greater presence in the village than brief, infrequent PCSO and Mobile Police Station visits

In the winter we were delighted to announce that we had very worthy joint recipients of the Villager of the Year Award; Barbara and Edward Rubie joined a distinguished list of people who have received this honour over the years.

The council continues to provide opportunities for bringing the Detling community together. Our Open Day took place again in September and we have future plans to organise Boot Fairs and a community shop in the village - watch this space. We are also in the process of setting up a database of residents' email addresses so that we can communicate important information such as road closures, police messages and utility companies' notices as quickly as possible throughout the village. Whilst the Detling News has gone from strength to strength in recent years it is a monthly publication so we are looking to create a system of communicating quickly to as many villagers as possible - again, watch this space.

Mark Housden
Chairman

THE PARISH COUNCIL

Established: 1884

The Detling Parish Council represents an electorate of 610 people on the electoral roll living in 310 houses. This is a drop of 45 people over an 8 year period.

The Parish is 6.16km long and varies between 250m to 1.42km wide, extending from the M20 through the village over the North Downs Scarp, roughly centring on Scragged Oak Road and extending towards the M2 in the north.

Detling is bordered to the South and West by Boxley Parish, to the East by Thurnham and the North by Stockbury and Bredhurst Parishes.

The Parish Council is composed of seven councillors. Elections are held every four years with the next election being held in May 2019. We meet in the Committee Room of the Detling Village Hall at 7.00pm on the first Tuesday of each month except January and August.

All meetings are open to the public and press. The council have benefited from a good level of support and attendance over the year.

The Parish has a permanent Planning Committee, which meets prior to each main Council meeting.

The Parish also benefits from the regular reporting of one of Kent Messenger's local correspondents; Jenny Cosgrove, who keeps the village in the news on a weekly basis.

The Council has in place the following Policies and Procedures, in accordance with its Standing Orders, which are revised on a regular basis.

Equal Opportunities

Code of Conduct

Disability Policy

Complaints Procedure

Financial Risk Assessment

Parish Elections

Engagement Strategy

VILLAGER OF THE YEAR

Established: 2005

The Parish Council presented the community award for a person from Detling, who has made a significant contribution towards the life of the village.

We were pleased that Mr John Faller was nominated and the Parish Council was extremely pleased to recommend this award in recognition of his work within the community.

David Humphrey volunteered to create the superb illuminated presentation certificate and the presentation was made by Parish Councillor Irene Bowie at the village's annual Christmas Fayre.

Past recipients of this award have been:

Barbara and Edward Rubie	2014	Presented by: Mrs Irene Bowie
Dr Gavin McLaggan	2013	Presented by: Mr John Clayton
Mr John Faller	2012	Presented by: Mrs Irene Bowie
Mrs Gill Humfrey	2011	Presented by: Sir Richard Alexander Bt
Mrs Tikki Gulland	2010	Presented by: Mr John Clayton
Mr John Monk	2009	Presented by: Mr Geoff Cosgrove TD
Mrs Margaret Cooke	2008	Presented by: Mike Tamsett MBE
Mrs Leslie Savage	2007	Presented by: Reverend Elizabeth Attawell
Mrs Thelma Ford	2006	Presented by: Lord Sandy Bruce-Lockhart CBE
Mrs Pat Follett	2005	Presented by: Mr Geoff Cosgrove TD

Parish Chairmen

Term of Office	Years in Office	Chairman
1884 - 1899	15	W F Mercer
1899 - 1904	5	J N Badcock
1904 - 1913	9	R Cooke
1913 - 1927	14	W J Naylor
1927 - 1931	4	Charles Brown
1931 - 1946	15	F Croft
1946 - 1968	22	A Hooker
1968 - 1973	5	Stanley E Rowe
1973 - 1988	15	Norman Bingham
1988 - 1992	4	Alan G Cooke
1992 - 2001	9	Gavin McLaggan
2001 - 2012	11	Geoff Cosgrove
2012		Mark Housden

PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Planning

Cllr. Evernden (Chairman)

Cllr. Kennard

Cllr. Clayton

Horish Wood Management

Cllr. Griffiths (Chairman)

Cllr. Kennard

Cllr. Clayton

Cllr. Bowie

Cllr. Evernden

Finance

Cllr. Housden

Representatives for Outside Bodies

Village Hall

Cllr. Denny

Police Liaison

Cllr. Griffiths

A249 Action Group

Cllr. Housden

Highways

Cllr. Housden

KALC

Cllr. Bowie

Kent Downs

Cllr. Kennard

JPG

Cllr. Housden

Other Liaison

Village Youth

Cllr. Housden

Grants

Cllr. Kennard

Environment

Cllr. Evernden

Neighbourhood Watch

Cllr. Denny

Parish Open Day

Cllr. Bowie

Village Planting

Cllr. Kennard

PARISH OPEN SPACES

The Parish is dissected by a network of 24 separate footpaths, bridleways and byways totalling 10.7km in length.

There are an extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and byways in the Parish, in varying condition and with good and poor way markings. A survey of all paths is still to be conducted in conjunction with KCC's Parish Paths Partnership, as the starting point of a proper maintenance plan.

Horish Wood

Horish Wood was purchased by the Parish Council in 2005. The wood and grassland are now becoming established and this will be an excellent area for parishioners to use for years to come.

Local resident, John Monk, as usual has been busy working in the woods to maintain access and keep the woods and grassland tidy. All the fencing has now been completed to the A249 and we have added some rabbit mesh alongside the fence to the motorway, but everyone must still be careful if they let their dogs run free.

This year a Management Plan for Horish Wood has been adopted by the Parish Council. This was written by the Kent Downs Group and outlines a maintenance and coppicing plan for the woodland for future years.

Monk's Meadow

This field behind Hockers Lane was purchased at auction in 2010, it was named Monk's Meadow in a competition run by the Parish.

Local resident, John Monk has put in a huge effort in creating paths and tidying up the whole area. We have been pleased with our purchase and the masses of wild flowers and the views have certainly made this a place to walk and enjoy. John has also made and installed some benches so that the views and tranquillity of the area can be enjoyed by all.

Scragged Oak Viewpoint

Scragged Oak Viewpoint is the triangle of land between Scragged Oak Road and the A249 containing beech woodland and chalk grassland known for its biodiversity and glorious views over the Kent countryside. In the 1990s the area became an eyesore and a place for fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour.

Kent Wildlife Trust now maintains this viewpoint and it is now one of Kent Wildlife Trusts roadside nature reserves.

The Old School Playing Field

This field is located next to the Village Hall and was the former playing field for the Village School.

This is an amenity for all residents to enjoy.

2014/15 ACCOUNTS

The parish council is able to raise money directly from the public in its rates in order to carry out its functions. Its powers to do this are found in Section 150 of the Local Government Act 1972. This is called a Parish Precept.

In 2014/2015 our precept amounted to £19801, this equates to approximately £64.41 per Detling household per annum, or £1.24 per week!

Our other main source of income comes from the Borough Council's Parish Services grant, this is a fund awarded to the more rural parishes of the Borough to finance local activities and projects specified by the Borough Council.

DETLING PARISH COUNCIL
BALANCE SHEET
FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH
2015

	<u>Year</u> <u>Ended</u> <u>31st March 2015</u>		<u>Year</u> <u>Ended</u> <u>31st March 2014</u>	
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
<u>FIXED ASSETS</u>				
		0		0
<u>LONG TERM ASSETS</u>				
<i>Investments</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>Long term Debts</i>	<u>0.00</u>		<u>0.00</u>	
		0.00		0.00
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>				
<i>Stocks & Shares</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>Re-imbursable VAT</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>Debtors</i>	331.07		1114.81	
<i>Temporary Lendings</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>Payments in Advance</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>Cash in Hand</i>	<u>47132.30</u>		<u>39475.35</u>	
	47463.37		40590.16	
<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>				
<i>Creditors</i>	500.00		500.00	
<i>Temporary Loans</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>Bank Overdraft</i>	<u>0.00</u>		<u>0.00</u>	
	500.00		500.00	
<u>Current Assets less Liabilities</u>		<u>46963.37</u>		<u>40090.16</u>
		<u>46963.37</u>		<u>40090.16</u>
<u>REPRESENTED BY:</u>				
<i>General Fund Brought Forward</i>	38558.16		33871.52	
<i>Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year</i>	6873.21		4686.64	
<i>Transfer from Earmarked Reserves</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>Transfer to Earmarked Reserves</i>	-2.80		0.00	
		45428.57		38558.16
<i>Earmarked Reserves</i>	1532.00		1532.00	
<i>Interest on Reserves in Year</i>	2.80		0.00	
		<u>1534.80</u>		<u>1532.00</u>
		<u>46963.37</u>		<u>40090.16</u>

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 31st March 2015 and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.

DETLING PARISH COUNCIL
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
ACCOUNT
FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2015

	<u>Year ended</u> <u>31st March 2015</u>		<u>Year ended</u> <u>31st March 2014</u>	
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
<u>INCOME</u>				
<i>Precept</i>		19,801.00		19,520.00
<i>Interest</i>		98.82		85.08
<i>Service Income</i>		1,736.00		1,736.00
<i>VAT</i>		331.07		643.82
<i>Rents/Hire Fees</i>		0.00		0.00
<i>Other Income</i>		1,597.00		1.00
<i>Grants</i>		1,905.00		2,299.00
<u>Total Income</u>		<u>25,468.89</u>		<u>24,284.90</u>
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>				
<i>General Administration</i>	15,176.11		15,276.68	
<i>Service Expenditure</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>VAT</i>	331.07		643.82	
<i>Open Spaces</i>	1,351.00		1,941.06	
<i>Other</i>	1,737.50		1,736.70	
<i>W/off unrecoverable debtors</i>	0.00		0.00	
<u>Total Expenditure</u>		<u>18,595.68</u>		<u>19,598.26</u>
SURPLUS/-DEFICIT		<u>6,873.21</u>		<u>4,686.64</u>

DETLING PARISH COUNCIL
BANK REC. FOR YEAR ENDED 31/03/15

<u>Opening Balance of A/C's</u>	£	39,475.35
+ income	£	26,249.83
add interest	£	2.80
- expenditure	-£	18,595.68
<u>Balance</u>	£	<u>47,132.30</u>

Bank Reconciliation

Community Directplus Account	£	45,629.27
less cheques o/s	£	-
Business Select 14 Day Account	£	1,503.03
<u>Balance</u>	£	<u>47,132.30</u>

<u>Difference</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>-</u>
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DETLING PARISH COUNCIL

Supporting Notes to Accounts Year Ended 31st March 2015

Assets - Value over £1000.00 only.

Detling Village Hall.

Horish Wood, asset value £55000.00

Bus Shelter, insured for £2000.00

Hockers Lane Land, asset value £14000.00

Borrowings.

As at the close of business on 31st March 2015 there were no loans to the Council outstanding.

Leases.

Detling Village Hall is leased to the Detling Village Hall Committee from 1975 until 2025. Rent is one pound per annum.

Seeboard Wayleave. £8.19 payable every four years.

Debtors.

VAT £331.07

Creditors.

Audit Fees £500.00

Outstanding Cheques.

There were no outstanding cheques.

Tenancies.

None.

Service Expenditure.

Parish Services Grant of £1736.00 received from Maidstone Borough Council.

Advertising and Publicity.

Monthly Newsletter.

Pensions.

The Council made no pension contributions during the year.

Earmarked reserves.

The Cooperative Account is an earmarked reserve for a recreation field for the Village. This fund having previously been known as the Playing Field Fund.

