

Bobbing Parish Council – Annual Parish Meeting Wednesday 19th May 2015

Parish Council Chairmans report

Bobbing Parish Council serves the communities of Bobbing Village, Howt Green, Rooks View, Key Street, the surrounding rural areas and parts of Grove Park and the Meads. During the past year the parish council held 12 regular meetings plus the Parish Council AGM. All the meetings were held in the Village Hall usually on the first Wednesday of the month.

The past year has been busy; a year of change. Three councillors, regrettably the younger ones, announced they would not stand at the recently held May elections. Having to replace young enthusiastic and experienced councillors is proving to be difficult. Other local parishes are also experiencing difficulties with people volunteering to serve on parish councils.

Our new, or may be not so new now (how time flies), parish clerk is now fully established. Thankfully the Parish Council managed to tempt Lynda to be our Parish Clerk. Her experience has proved to be invaluable during the past 12 months. For those of you that do not know Lynda is also Clerk to several other Parishes, which has benefits for all the parishes, she has settled in quickly for which we are grateful.

This year the parish council received 36 planning applications for comment, the highest for 10 years. Planning issues were not limited to householder developments (Conservatories, extensions and porches etc.). The applications which attracted most comment were the Watermark site, the traveller's site on land adjacent to Upper Toes and the expanding farm accommodations at Howt Green. There is also the possibility of two 10mw solar farms in the open countryside and very close to each other. However pre application planning issues are also causing concern and debate. While we cannot officially comment until a planning application is submitted there is a real possibility of Bricearth extraction in Newington and Orchard Farm Iwade. Both of which will mean a considerable numbers of additional HGV's using the local road network for a number of years. There is also the possibility of more houses at Quinton Road and Howt Green. There is continuing dialog regarding a very dangerous footpath (PROW) crossing the railway "Simpsons crossing" which requires a footbridge. The new Meads community hall continues to suffer delays, however the medical centre is nearly complete, although that appears to be bringing parking issues. Some of these developments may not actually be in Bobbing parish but they impact on local residents and have attracted debate.

Away from planning a lot of time has been spent on contacting Swale BC, Kent Highways, and the Police for clarifications regarding many of their initiatives and proposals.

However, I cannot let the year go without mentioning the 1914-18 Remembrance Day event held in the Church and Village Hall. This was extremely well supported and excellently organised by Sue Samson and Cllr Robert Ball.

Looking forward 12 months I hope the parish council will serve the residents as best as time and resources will allow. The parish council will endeavour to keep the Parish a presentable and pleasant place to live. However, one thing is certain, residents will always take an interest in their immediate neighbourhood and make contact if they want to know what is going on, especially if it is impacting on their lives. Finally it is good to see more members of the public attending meetings.

Residents can always look at the parish web site (www.bobbingpc.kentparishes.gov.uk) or pick up the phone and talk and inform Councillors or Parish Clerk of issues or concerns. If we are not aware we cannot help.

Planning

Four more applications than the previous year; highest for 10 years.

Year

2014/15	36 appns
2013/14	32 appns
2012/13	27 appns
2011/12	21 appns
2010/11	21 appns
2009/10	19 appns
2008/9	24 appns
2007/8	28 appns
2006/7	24 appns
2005/6	20 appns
2004/5	39 appns
2003/4	31 appns
2002/3	24 appns

Regular ongoing concerns (not an order of priority):

Key Street roundabout, pedestrian safety, traffic speed.

Keycol Hill, parking.

Bobbing Hill, parking and speed limit signs.

Bobbing Village, reduce speed limit past village school/village hall/church.

Hilton Drive, car parking (Grove Park School run times).

Simpsons railway crossing PROW footpath

Everywhere, Litter, fly tipping, and wrappers by food shops.

The Meads parking issues

Attendance at Council Meetings (May 2014 to April 2015)

Bobbing Parish Council (9 Councillors)	Attendance (max 12 meetings)	Expenses claimed £.p
Robert Ball (Vice chairman)	12/12	Nil
Duncan Dewar-Whally* (Ward councillor)	5/12	Nil
Graham Herbert (Chairman)	11/12	Nil
Larry Major	11/12	Nil
Tracey Wright	6/12	Nil
Keith Johnson (Planning Apps)	6/12	Nil
Ross Richardson	6/12	Nil
Peter Page **	6/9	Nil
Rebecca Bartlett ***	2/3	Nil

* Cllr Dewar-Whally (Ward Cllr) attends SBC meetings which sometimes clash with BPC meetings.

** Commenced July 2014

*** Commenced February 2015

Ward Councillors attending Parish Council meetings during 2013/14

Cllr G Randall (Conservative) attended meetings
 Cllr D Dewar-Whally (Conservative) attended meetings
 Cllr Mike Baldock Kent County Councillor (UKIP) also attended parish council meetings

Bobbing Parish Precept

There are 35 parishes in Swale which set a precept.
 There are 8,800 parishes nationally.
 (There are about 760 homes in Bobbing parish, of which about 700 pay council tax).
 The highest for a Band D property is £62.63 (Queenborough) lowest £16.24 (Tong)

Year	Parish Precept £	£ Band D property (Annual per household)
1997/98	4,777	8.72
1998/99	4,833	8.73
1999/00	3,888	7.03
2000/01	2,944	7.03
2001/02	4,500	7.82
2002/03	4,500	6.61
2003/04	3,500	4.99
2004/05	3,900	5.56 (Lowest in Swale District)
2005/06	5,000	7.12 (2 nd lowest in Swale District)
2006/07	5,750	8.05 (3 rd lowest in Swale District)
2007/08	9,420	12.60 (5 th lowest in Swale District)
2008/09	10,550	14.07 (5 th lowest in Swale District)
2009/10	10,300	13.60 (6 th lowest in Swale District)
2010/11	10,300	13.56 (3 rd lowest in Swale District)
2011/12	10,500	13.85 (4 th lowest in Swale District)
2012/13	10,500	13.81 (4 th lowest in Swale District)
2013/14	11,250	16.45 (4 th lowest in Swale District)
2014/15	13,500	19.61 (4 th lowest in Swale District)
2015/16	13,600	19.80 (3 rd lowest in Swale District)

In 2014/15 Swale BC was one of two Kent LA's not having passed on any of the money provided to mitigate the impact of localised Council Tax support schemes.

Finally

On behalf of the Parish Council and myself in particular I would like to express our thanks to Lynda our Parish Clerk for all the work she has undertaken throughout the past year. I know there have been times during the year when it has not been easy, in fact she has probably felt overrun with task not knowing which to do first. But without her experience, dedication and attendance at outside meetings I am sure many issues would have taken even longer. We really do appreciate our Parish clerk even if we do not always say so.