

**HARTLEY PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT
2018/19**



Your Parish Councillors



Larry Abraham
(Vice Chairman)



Chris Alford



Sheila Bennett



Penny Cole



Lesley Driscoll



Annette Ewing



David Graeme



Mally Malham



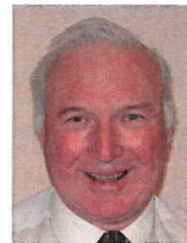
Matthew Mohr



Anne Oxtoby
(Chairman)



Ian Ross



Vince Sewell



Andrew Tremain

Councillors can be contacted via the Parish Clerk, Helen Boden, at the Parish Office, Hartley Library, Ash Road, Hartley, Longfield, Kent, DA3 8EL, by e mail: mail@hartleyparishcouncil.org.uk or by telephone: 01474 709441.

The Annual Report is printed and published by Hartley Parish Council

Chairman's report

Dear Resident

Once again I have to report on a very busy year. We have been consulted on the Sevenoaks District Council's Local Plan and after holding a public meeting in July 2018 attended by over 700 residents, we employed a consultant to formalise our objection to the proposal to site 800 houses in the valley between Hartley and Fawkham. That proposal was rejected by Sevenoaks District Council and The Local Plan is now going forward to the Inspector without its inclusion.

We celebrated the anniversary of the end of World War 1 by installing and lighting a Beacon on the 11th day of the 11th month 2018. The Local Vocals entertained the crowds with many traditional songs and after a short service where the names of Hartley soldiers were read out, the evening finished with a red, white and blue firework display. Our thanks go to everyone who worked hard to create such a memorable event.

It is a great pleasure to report that a light controlled 'Puffin' crossing will be installed on the Ash Road between Larks Field and Parkfield thanks to financial contributions from the Parish Council, Kent County Council and our Kent County Councillor David Brazier. The installation should take place in the summer.

Unfortunately two of our councillors, Dorothy Vesey and Carol Beaman, resigned during the year. Our thanks go to them for all their hard work and knowledge that they gave to the Council. We have co-opted councillors Ian Ross, Mally Malham and Lesley Driscoll to end the year with a full complement of thirteen. Once again I have to thank all the councillors for their hard work and time given to the Council.

Our Council would not run as efficiently as it does, without the hard work of our Clerks Helen Boden and Jane Tyrrell and my thanks go to them.

I commend the committee reports to you.

Anne Oxtoby, Chairman of the Council.

Finance Committee



The Finance Committee closely monitors the Parish Council's expenditure and is responsible for ensuring that its accounts are properly prepared in accordance with strict audit rules. It is also responsible for setting the budget for the next financial year and proposing to Council what the precept for the year should be.

The Council's accounts are internally audited by an independent auditor on a half yearly and annual basis. The Committee notes the auditor's comments and ensures that action points are attended to.

The Committee reviews the systems of internal audit during the year and is satisfied that the controls in place fulfil the fiduciary duties of the Council.

The Council's accounts for 2017/18 were approved by the Council at its Annual Meeting in May 2018 and were made available for public inspection. The approved accounts were submitted to the Audit Commission to be externally audited.

After being properly advertised, local parishioners have the right and are welcome to ask questions about the accounts and to raise any objections they may have. Parishioners are requested to initially raise their concerns with the Parish Council. If objectors are not satisfied with the Council's reply, they have the right to raise their concerns with the external auditor.

The Council's accounts for the year to 31 March 2019 are set out in pages 5 and 6. In this year there is a surplus, as income has exceeded expenditure by £14,354. We received £16,243 from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which we had not budgeted for as it is unknown and difficult to estimate. This money can only be spent on certain expenditure to improve our Parish amenities and we intend to use it for part of the cost of the Puffin Crossing on the Ash Road.

On the expenditure side we spent over £9,900 on the Nation's Tribute to commemorate the end of World War I, the largest cost of which was for the beacon which will of course be available for other celebrations in the future. We also spent over £11,000 on Consultants fees and ancillary costs opposing Sevenoaks District Council's proposed Local Plan for development in our Parish.

Our biggest cost in any year are Staff costs. We are very fortunate to have two excellent staff who carry out their duties administering the Council's affairs and finances extremely efficiently.

The Parish Council has kept the annual council tax payment for 2019/20 at the same level as several previous years which is £52.32 for a Band D Property. The Committee endeavours to ensure that this money is well spent for the benefit of all parishioners.

Members of the Committee: Councillors; *Mr L Abraham,
Mr C Alford, Mrs S Bennett (Chairman), *Mrs A Oxtoby,
and Mr V Sewell *ex officio

Northfield Management Committee

Northfield is 68 acres of open space on the southern boundary of Hartley. It has ancient and new woodlands, a play area, many walks for ramblers and dog walkers and a horse ride that is available for a small cost to local riders in the summer months. It has a hay crop that is taken in July and a flower meadow that is cut in September.

The U3A have been taking regular bee walks across Northfield and report seeing many bees. We have allowed an initiative from a resident to put Dormouse nest boxes on the margins of Barnett's Wood to encourage their development.

We will be, with our landlord's agreement, seeking to make Northfield a Village Green.

Members of the Northfield Management Committee:

Councillors; Mr D Graeme, Mrs A Oxtoby, Mr V Sewell and 3 Members from Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council.

Burial Grounds and Gardens of Remembrance Committee

Our burial grounds are a peaceful place where residents can remember loved ones or just find time to contemplate.

Manor Field Burial Ground has had the lavender for the Garden of Remembrance laid out and it is probable that the first burials will take place in 2019.

The Conifers by the lay by have been removed and a new hedge planted. There will also be some new planting in the Old Garden of Remembrance and bark laid to keep it looking neat and tidy.



There have been 5 burials and 17 interments of ashes this year.

The current Burial Ground has room for only 3 or 4 more burials.

Members of the Committee:

Councillors; *Mr L Abraham, , Mrs P Cole, Mrs A Ewing, *Mrs A Oxtoby (Chairman) and Mr I Ross.

*ex officio

**Hartley Parish Council
Income & Expenditure
Account
01/04/2018 to 31/03/2019**

| (Last) Year Ended 31st March 2018 | | (Current) Year Ended 31st March 2019 |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| £ | <u>Income</u> | £ |
| 132,215 | Precept | 132,803 |
| 192 | Income | 16,920 |
| 8,974 | General Costs | 7,113 |
| 4,735 | Burial Grounds | 9,850 |
| 808 | Allotments | 823 |
| 5,098 | Open Spaces | 4,202 |
| 4,658 | Manor Field Pavilion | 4,635 |
| <hr/> 156,679 <hr/> | | <hr/> 176,345 <hr/> |
| | <u>Expenditure</u> | |
| 65,718 | Staff Costs | 69,162 |
| 12,103 | General Costs | 25,372 |
| 7,387 | Office Costs | 9,866 |
| 24,219 | Burial Grounds | 7,154 |
| 90 | Allotments | 970 |
| 39,216 | Open Spaces | 39,553 |
| 7,619 | Manor Field Pavilion | 7,250 |
| 2,034 | Youth Services | 2,663 |
| <hr/> 158,386 <hr/> | | <hr/> 161,991 <hr/> |
| | <u>General Fund</u> | |
| 142,336 | Opening Balance | 173,249 |
| <hr/> 156,679 | Plus: Income for Year | <hr/> 176,345 |
| 299,015 | | 349,594 |
| <hr/> 158,386 | Less: Expenditure for Year | <hr/> 161,991 |
| 140,629 | | 187,603 |
| <hr/> -32,620 | Transfer to/from Reserves | <hr/> 32,094 |
| <hr/> 173,249 <hr/> | Closing Balance | <hr/> 155,510 <hr/> |

**Hartley Parish Council
Balance Sheet
31/03/2019**

| (Last) Year Ended 31st March 2018 | | (Current) Year Ended 31st March 2019 |
|---|--|--|
| £ | LONG TERM ASSETS | £ |
| 0 | | 0 |
| <u>0</u> | | <u>0</u> |
| | CURRENT ASSETS | |
| 358 | Debtors | 242 |
| 2,604 | VAT Control A/C | 2,920 |
| 20,792 | Current Bank Account | 17,701 |
| 167,278 | Business Saver Account | 198,082 |
| 40 | Petty Cash | 68 |
| 73,058 | Unity Bank Current Account | 64,846 |
| <u>264,131</u> | | <u>283,857</u> |
| <u>264,131</u> | TOTAL ASSETS | <u>283,857</u> |
| | CURRENT LIABILITIES | |
| 1,409 | Creditors | 4,231 |
| 5,400 | Accruals | 7,950 |
| <u>6,809</u> | | <u>12,181</u> |
| <u>257,322</u> | Total Assets Less Current Liabilities | <u>271,677</u> |
| | Represented by: | |
| 173,249 | General Reserves | 155,510 |
| 43,679 | EMR Capital Reserve | 43,679 |
| 10,580 | Earmarked Reserve | 0 |
| 10,809 | New Burial Ground Reserve | 9,163 |
| 27,081 | EMR Highway Improvements | 25,581 |
| 2,505 | CIL Receipts A | 8,609 |
| 0 | CIL Receipts B | 10,139 |
| 0 | EMR Nation's Tribute | 92 |
| 0 | EMR Local Plan | 8,904 |
| <u>257,322</u> | | <u>271,677</u> |

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 31/03/2019 and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.

Amenities and Open Spaces Committee

Meeting regularly throughout the year our brief is to manage the various open spaces owned by the Parish Council.

We are also responsible for the Pavilion at Manor Field and liaise with various agencies to ensure that grass is cut, hedges are trimmed and bins are emptied.

The Committee is responsible for all the open spaces which include Manor Field, Longfield Hill, Rectory Meadow, Billings Hill Shaw, Gorse Wood and part of the woodland known as Hartley Wood.

The woodland trees are a vital part of our village heritage; managing the trees contained within these areas is a particularly important task as we seek to maintain their preservation and ensure that damaged trees are dealt with to prevent risk to the public.

We are also responsible for the three recreation grounds in the parish; Longfield Hill, Woodland Avenue and Chantry Avenue, as well as the allotment site in Woodland Avenue/Larks Field.

The recreation grounds are regularly inspected to ensure compliance with the appropriate safety standards and their upkeep is important to ensure that they can be enjoyed by the younger members of our community.

The facilities at Manor Field are regularly used by New Ash Green and Hartley Cricket Club and Hartley De Sales Football Club throughout their respective seasons.

Meopham Cricket Club makes use of the pitch at Longfield Hill.

The Pavilion at Manor Field is regularly used for meetings, social events and indoor sports and leisure activities.

The maintenance of the building requires constant attention to ensure its safe usage by the Community.

The allotment site at Woodland Avenue/Larks Field continues to be popular, but there are a few vacant plots at the moment. Anyone interested in taking a plot should contact the Parish Office on 01474709441 or by email on mail@hartleyparishcouncil.org.uk

Rectory Meadow is classified as a Local Nature Reserve and the Parish Council consults with a number of experts to ensure its upkeep is managed in the appropriate way.

Whilst we are all fortunate to live in Hartley, the Parish Council does rely on the ongoing support of ALL residents to help maintain tidiness and cleanliness by dealing with litter and ensuring that our ever growing dog community is not allowed to foul any public areas.

Members of the Committee:

Councillors; *Mr L Abraham, Mrs S Bennett, Mrs L Driscoll, Mrs A Ewing, Mr D Graeme, Mr M Malham, Mr M Mohr, *Mrs A Oxtoby, Mr V Sewell and Mr A Tremain (Chairman). *ex officio



General Purposes Committee

This Committee deals with a variety of matters which fall outside the responsibilities of the Council's other Committees.

Highway Matters;

There is much better news about the Parish Council's long campaign to install a pedestrian crossing in Ash road near the junction with Parkfield, to provide safe access for pedestrians crossing the road to the bus stops. The pressure on Kent Highways has paid off and the Parish Council has received confirmation that work is programmed to take place during the summer.

A recent traffic count showed an increase in traffic along Ash Road by 10% to 108,000 vehicles per week and therefore the type of crossing to be installed has to be a 'light controlled Puffin' crossing.

The cost of the crossing will be met by the Parish Council and Kent County Council together with County Councillor David Brazier who has supported the Parish Council and will make a donation from his Communities Fund.

The Committee has approved the installation of Village Gateway Signs at each end of Ash Road and is arranging a meeting with Kent Highways to agree precise locations. These signs would welcome drivers to Hartley and on leaving the village, drivers would be thanked for driving carefully.

During the year, Residents have raised concern about traffic conditions on Hoselands Hill and the speed of coaches along Ash Road and advice has been offered.

Remembrance Sunday;

The Parish Council organised the Services of Remembrance on the 11th November which coincided with the 100th anniversary of the end of WW1. The service in the afternoon at the War Memorial in Ash Road was very well attended and some 700 - 800 residents and their families attended a Community Commemoration, as part of the Nations Tribute, in Manor Field. This involved a short service and readings followed by the lighting of a permanent beacon, fireworks and Community singing. The arrangements for

the day were very much a Community supported event and the Parish Council wishes to record its appreciation to those volunteers.

Youth Services;

The Committee reviewed the work undertaken during the year by its contractor West Kent Services and the consultations they had undertaken during the year to establish future need. In the light of this it has appointed the firm to undertake weekly youth sessions on Tuesdays from April to October 2019.

Family fun days were held in May, July and August.

Other Matters;

The Parish Council was consulted on numerous matters throughout the year including NHS Consultation Papers about the creation of an Urgent Treatment Centre for Dartford, Gravesend and Swanley, in which the Committee expressed a preference for it to be located at the Gravesend Community Hospital because of parking problems at Darent Valley Hospital and also to a review by Kent County Council on its Libraries, Registration and Archives Services.

Members of the Committee:

Councillors; *Mr L Abraham, Mr C Alford (Chairman), Mrs P Cole, Mrs L Driscoll, Mr D Graeme, *Mrs A Oxtoby, Mr V Sewell and Mr A Tremain.

*ex officio



Planning Committee

Meetings - The Parish is a consultee on all planning applications submitted to Sevenoaks District Council that affect Hartley. The Planning Committee meets fortnightly, on a Wednesday morning at 10.00a.m. at Hartley Library, Ash Road. Before each meeting, the Committee conducts site visits as deemed necessary by the Chairman.

Residents' Views - Notice of the meetings are displayed on the Parish notice board outside Hartley Library. All residents are welcome to attend the meetings and will be given an opportunity to express their views on any application, before the Committee reaches its decision.

If an application affects a resident they can write to Sevenoaks District Council with their views. It is also helpful if a copy of the letter is sent to the Parish Office.



Applications - Between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019, the Parish Council was consulted on 72 planning applications. No objection was raised to 47 of these and objections were raised to 21, with no comment on 4. The District Council gave a decision contrary to the Parish Council's views on 12 applications, 3 of which were delegated decisions. 2 decisions were taken to appeal by the applicants.

Appeals - The results of planning appeals received are as follows:

Appeals Dismissed: Thames View Farm, Church Road and Land to the north of The Black Lion, Ash Road.

This has been a challenging year for the Planning Committee and indeed the Parish Council as a whole, as a result of two major sites in Hartley being put forward to be included in Sevenoaks District Council's Local Plan. A Planning Consultant was employed and our objections to the sites were put forward. Thankfully, both sites have been excluded from the Local Plan.

Hartley is a desirable area for developers and the Parish Council remains very aware of this and continues to do everything in its power to preserve the village envelope and surrounding Green Belt.

Members of the Committee:

Councillors: *Mr L Abraham (Chairman), Mr C Alford, Mrs S Bennett, Mrs A Ewing *Mrs A Oxtoby, Mr I Ross and Mr V Sewell.

*ex officio

Facilities

Allotments

Billings Hill Shaw

Chantry Avenue Recreation Ground

Foxborough Wood (Part of)

Gorse Wood

Hartley Burial Grounds and Gardens of Remembrance

Hartley Wood (Part of)

Hartley Village Hall*

Hoselands Green

Longfield Hill Recreation Ground

Manor Field and Pavilion

Northfield

Rectory Meadow (Local Nature Reserve)

War Memorial - Hartley Green

Woodland Avenue Recreation Ground



Hartley Green



Hartley Village Hall



Woodland Avenue

*Hartley Parish Council acts as the Sole Trustee for the Hartley Village Hall Trust which is a charity registered under Charity No. 1043030

The Pavilion at Manor Field and Hartley Village Hall, Ash Road, are both available to hire for children's parties and similar events, or just for a one off or regular meeting place. For further information please contact the Clerk on Tel: 01474 709441 or email: mail@hartleyparishcouncil.org.uk, for the Pavilion or villagehall@hartleyparishcouncil.org.uk, for the Village Hall.