

# **Stock Parish Council**

## **Chairman's Report 2010-2011**

### **Council Membership**

The Parish Council has again benefitted from a strong and committed team of Councillors, all serving for the complete year. I am grateful for the diligence and efforts of all involved. Despite the economic conditions there has been no reduction in the work falling on the Parish Council.

### **The Village Environment**

Looking around the village all can see the problems that continue to face us every day. Our lanes and verges have suffered from the hard winter and are continuing to suffer from heavy usage with building works. I am pleased that the majority of developers complete reinstatement works so that the damage is not long lasting.

Litter is a problem. A major effort involving Chelmsford Borough Council will tackle the effects of this in the main areas of the village centre, but it is incumbent upon us all to treat our village with respect to maintain its appearance. For a number of years now the Parish Council has not entered Best Kept Village competitions and unless we can demonstrate a significant improvement over the coming months we will probably continue to refrain from entering.

I am pleased that the footpaths in our village continue to be maintained to a high standard. However, as in previous years there have been reports of misuse. Firstly we had cyclists using footpaths and latterly we have had horse riders using some of the narrow footpaths. This is both prohibited and dangerous.

The fencing around the children's play area was completed last year and it was decided to apply for a grant for a slide in the area. I am pleased to report that we were successful with this grant application. This work will be completed during the summer.

### **The former library**

The Parish Council organised a special meeting in November to discuss the former library. A well attended meeting provided much useful feedback on the possible acquisition of the building. Although there was much support for the building to be used by the Stock and Buttsbury Heritage Society, there was insufficient support from other village organisations. The Parish Council therefore did not pursue the acquisition, although it has continued to give support to the Stock and Buttsbury Heritage Society in its endeavours to acquire the building. The matter is still with Essex County Council for a decision.

### **Roads and Traffic**

We have achieved some successes in the Highways arena. Common Road has been resurfaced as too has been the High Street. However the new pedestrian crossing has still to be completed. Resurfacing of the pavement along the High Street is also in the programme, but clearly the financial

conditions are having an impact. The Parish Council will continue to lobby for improvements including traffic measures on the B1007.

### **Planning Matters**

As previously reported, this area takes up a lot of the Parish Council's time. We made comment on over 80 planning applications in the last year.

The Parish Council continues to exercise its duty in representing the views of the village. The desire to maintain an even balance, and a strong village atmosphere, with a mix of housing styles/sizes etc remains the aim. A Village Design Statement, based on the views of the residents of the village, is still in draft and being discussed with Chelmsford Borough Council. Once this is completed and approved it will provide greater guidance to the Parish Council although the final responsibility will always rest with Chelmsford Borough Council.

### **Parking in the Village**

The parking situation is always under consideration. The position has been aggravated by the bus diversion leading to temporary parking restrictions at tight turning spots. However, these parking restrictions, particularly in Common Road have demonstrated how much safer the area is without parking on the highway. This has resulted in some suggestions that waiting restrictions be introduced, and these will have to be considered in due course.

### **Other Matters**

The Parish Council, along with the residents of the village, offer our sympathy to Sarge and Lesley at the Post Office following the incident in February. The ongoing disruption and the inconvenience are being monitored. Support for our village shop and Post Office is essential in these difficult times. The Post Office has been made aware of how important the post office is to the village of Stock. Our thanks also to the First Bus Group for maintaining the 100 service through the village with the diversion.

The PCSO's continue to attend most Parish Council meetings and are active around the village. We are grateful for their contribution.

### **Summary**

My thanks go to all Parish Councillors for their efforts throughout the year. The Clerk continues to provide detailed support and information which is invaluable and appreciated. Equally, Borough Councillor, Ian Grundy, works very hard on behalf of the Parish in his duties with Chelmsford Borough Council and his support to the Parish Council is much welcomed.

John Dixon

Chairman, Stock Parish Council

April 2011

