

Newsletter 78 January 2023

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Chair's update,

News Letter Contents / Council committees

Finance, Neighbourhood Plan update. Current Council business/projects. Highways, Open Spaces, Cemetery, Environment, Parish Hall, Miscellaneous.

Dear Parishioner,

The Parish Council (PC) wishes you all a happy and healthy new year.....

2022 has posed significant challenges to the residents of Charing and Charing Heath with global and domestic issues causing significant increases in food and utility bills. We continue to look at ways that we may be able to help those in need.

Finally, we will start to see the installation of the cameras that will monitor various parts of central Charing. This will hopefully reduce anti-social behaviour that has become prevalent over the last year or so. Cameras are to be monitored 24/7 by a dedicated facility in Ashford where any unacceptable behaviour will be identified and subsequently acted upon.

The PC continues to engage with Ashford Borough Councils (ABC) Planning Department over several sites within Charing Heath that have had long and continuing breaches of planning regulations. ABC seem incapable of enforcing the decisions that the planning inspector who had decided that the sites have a limited time to move and restore the sites to their original condition. Instead, these sites have now submitted further plans which we assume will start the whole process again. We as a PC find this wholly unacceptable that ABC continue to fail the residents in the way they carry out enforcement notices. We will continue to nag and moan until they do something positive.

Elections. Elections for the PC are to be held on the 4th of May 2023 and we welcome new candidates coming forward. If you would like any more information, or to attend a council meeting please contact the Clerk for more information.

Post Office. The PC are urgently liaising with Post Office Services to find a temporary solution as well as a permanent solution going forward. **Chris Prinn—Chair**

Finance

Report from the Chair of the Finance Committee

Another year has passed and I am able to update you on the financial situation and the precept for the coming year.



The much awaited CCTV system is to be installed during Feb, March. The cost has risen significantly from our initial estimates partly due to the government's decision to not allow certain Chinese manufactured equipment to be used, the length of time it took to gain permissions for the siting of the equipment and the increases that have affected everything in the last year.

The fencing to play areas has been completed and we have seen a significant decrease in the vandalism to the fencing now that it is all steel. We anticipate this will reduce the maintenance costs that we used to bear and eventually pay for the significant investment.

It has been particularly difficult this year to balance the need for fiscal prudence with the ever-increasing demands upon the Parish Council. We have a duty and legal requirement to maintain reserves in the bank to meet half yearly costs and with the dramatic increases that have affected all areas of our finances these have risen considerably over the past 12 months. We are extremely aware that the same increases **Cont-**

Cont- have been placed on your finances as well, so a balancing act has to be performed to meet the demands of our suppliers, employees and contractors with the needs of parishioners. The projections of the various committees budgets would require a precept increase of 40% if their worst case scenarios played out, the finance committee felt this was too excessive a burden to inflict upon you so we have agreed an increase of 11%, this we hope will keep us within our legal requirements (just) if the worst doesn't happen, without depleting reserves too much, but we do not have a crystal ball so must wait and see what befalls us in the coming year.

I am sorry that the precept increase is in double figures, we would like it to have been less, but we could not put the financial stability of the council at any greater risk nor could we put your own finances under any greater stress. **David Bennett - Finance Chair**

Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan has now been approved by the inspector and ABC. The next step is the referendum on the proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan document.



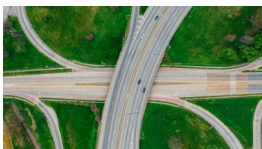
There will be an exhibition that will endeavour to explain the substance of the plan which we hope will give us more say on the way we would like Charing to be going forward into the next decade with the facilities that will serve all the residents in the village.

Within the plan will be the new village hall proposal, with associated parking and facilities for all, including disabled access that is currently unavailable within the existing hall. Our current Hall over 100 years old and now sadly it doesn't fulfil the requirements that are required to an acceptable level for all residents of the parish.

The Hall was one of many needs after analysing the results of the exhibitions that were held in the Charing Parish. The results informed the need for a new community Centre, that would appeal to a wider range of uses than the current facility. It will have a dedicated office for our Parish and Finance Clerks who both currently work from home, storage for parish documents that have to be kept for at least 7 years, business opportunities and many more benefits for the people of Charing.

Snapshot of Current Council Business/Projects

1. CCTV implementation 2. Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) 3. The Oak. 4. Neighbourhood plan. 5. Warm-Hub/Foodbank 6. Strategy to achieve a 30MPH limit for the A20 through Charing. 7. Post Office. Dawne Austen - Clerk to the Council



Highways Working Group (HWG) (Sub committee of CPC)

Introduction. The HWG is a sub committee of the CPC who's remit is to manage Highways issues for CPC. it is formed of Councillors and volunteers from the local community.

The PC are required to work with Kent County Council (KCC) using a document called the "Highways Improvement Plan" (HIP) where Highways issues are prioritised and agreed with KCC before being implemented. (Please be advised that funding, policy, and legalities strongly influence work within the HIP and can be frustrating to both the HWG and the public at large.

The HWG also use a document called the (Live Action Tracker And Planner (LATAP) where parishioners can monitor current work streams, progress and current issues. The LATAP and HIP alongside the HWG minutes are available on the CPC website.

The above committee's work has seen a refocus since Covid and is work in progress to produce our Vision, Aims and Objectives, Communication strategies, and to produce live work flow that all can see and participate in.

Currently we are working on **1. Developing the HIP 2. Strategies to achieve a 30MPH limit through Charing. 3. Monitoring the X roads. 4. Faversham rd speed limits. 5. Charing Village speed limit Gateways. Future considerations:- 1. Traffic flow and speed control through Charing Village. 2. Speed Gateways for Charing Heath. 3. Environmental issues. 4. Pedestrians. 5. Cycling..... Terry Hayward - HWG Chair**

Open Spaces (No Report for this issue) **Cemetery** (No Report for this issue)

Environment



'The environmental committee is less than a year old and has focused on ways to collect certain waste to generate revenue, compiling reports to assess the energy the village uses, both public and council with aim of identifying ways to reduce consumption. We also aim going forward to look at ways to reduce our carbon footprint. One example is that a new timer system for the village hall heating system has been installed to cut the significant wastage from the heaters being left on overnight.'

The committee would like to hear from parishoners about any ideas to improve our environment and to reduce costs/waste. Please speak to a councillor or email the clerk. **Luke Kerbey—Environment Chair**

Parish Hall

“Coffee Mornings at the Parish Hall”

There are coffee mornings held at Charing Parish Hall on Wednesday mornings. Come and join us and keep warm! These are free events for all. Donations will be welcome to assist with running costs. Wednesdays 10.00 am to 12.00 am. We look forward to seeing you there. A community warden event in conjunction with Charing Parish Council.' **Julia Strike-Parish Hall Chair**

“Whats on at the Hall.”

Monday	Zumba 1900-2000hrs	Contact Becki	becki@dancevisions.co.uk
Tuesday	Pilates 1800-1900hrs	Contact Lesley	Tel: 07815961043
	Badminton 1930-2130hrs	Contact Simon	silong79@hotmail.com
Wednesday	Ballroom* 1900-2000hrs	Contact Rory	rorycostain@icloud.com
	Ballroom* 2000-2100hrs		Tel: 07798728955
	Whist drive# 1930-2130hrs	Contact Sandie	sandiewhoosh@hotmail.com
Thursday	Pilates 1745-1845hrs	Contact Keighley	Tel: 07765221374
	History# 1930-2130hrs	Contact:	chairman@charinghistory.co.uk
Friday	Yoga 0930-1030hrs	Contact Keighley	
	Pilates 1045-1145hrs	Contact Keighley	

* 3 times a month

Once a month

The Village Hall is for hire for all occasions. Please contact the Clerk (Dawne Austen) for more information.

cpclerk@charingkent.org Tel: 01233713599

Miscellaneous

A new foodbank has been organised for the residents of Charing.

Donation/Drop off points are; Charing Church, Bookmakers Arms and the Pavilion.

Non perishable food items, sanitary products and cleaning products will be most welcome.

Collection will be via the Coffee Mornings at the Parish Hall.

Community & Youth Award 2023

The Annual Community & Youth award is presented to residents of Charing or Charing Heath who have given outstanding service to their village over a period of years. If you know of any candidates who have given this sort of service please do nominate them. The Youth element of this award is for 11—18 year olds.

The Community & Youth award 2023 will be presented at our Annual Parish Open Meeting on Tuesday 2nd May. A nomination form is printed below. All Charing / Charing Heath residents are invited to submit a nomination. Only one nomination per category, per resident, but all adult members of a family may submit a nomination form. Just photocopy the form or phone the Clerk, Dawne Austen, on 713599 for extra forms.

Completed forms, in a sealed envelope, should be sent to the Clerk at 6 Haffenden Meadow Charing TN27 OJR, or given to any councillor. The closing date for receiving voting forms will be 3rd April.

Community & Youth Award 2023 / Nomination Form

I would like to nominate for the Community* / Youth* Award (*Delete as appropriate)

.....Signed.....

Print Name.....

Only one vote per resident. In the event of a tie the award may be given to more than one person. For details of returning this form see above.

Parish Councillors - Charing

Lady Corry Bain Smith (vice chair) 712594
 Mrs Susan Easun (vice chair) 07761448607
 Ms Carrie Allen carrie@charingkent.org
 Mr Dennis Gudge 07957432104
 Mr Terry Hayward terry@charingkent.org
 Mr Luke Kerbey luke@charingkent.org
 Mrs Julia Strike 07855064707
 Mr Tylden Reed 713136 or 07767861003
 Mr Stephen Woodbridge
 stephen@charingkent.org

Rural Community Warden

Carol Coveney 07977981990

PCSO TBA (Charing) 101

Parish Councillors Charing Heath

Mr D Bennett (vice chair) 712054
 Mr Chris Prinn (Chair) 07872190187

Borough Councillors

Mr G Clarkson (Charing) 712081
 Mrs C Bell (C/Heath) 07970885065
 Mr C Simkins (County Cllr) 756705

Parish Clerk

Mrs Dawne Austen 713599

Burial Clerk

Mrs Hillay Evers 632671

Charing Parish Newsletter

Editor: Dawne Austen

Contributions or correspondence
for upcoming Newsletters

should be sent to:

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Kent TN27 OJR

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