



**Cold Norton's Annual Parish Meeting
Held at 8 pm on Wednesday 5th May 2010
At Cold Norton Village Hall**

THOSE PRESENT: Parish Councillors:
Mr. J. Archer (also a District Councillor)
Mrs. G. Gold (Chairman)
Mr. P. Guppy
Mr. C. Litscher
Mrs. A. McDonald
Mr. P. Wakeling

Mrs P. Channer, County Councillor
PCSO R. Stott
Mrs. M. Dyer (Parish Clerk) and 16 members of the public

APOLOGIES: Parish Councillor Professor L. Barclay

THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on 6th May 2009 were approved and signed as a correct record.

THE PARISH COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT was given by Parish Council Chairman, Mrs Gloria Gold, as follows:

Mrs Gold welcomed everyone to the meeting, which had followed the Annual General Meeting of the Village Hall Management Committee. Mrs Gold then introduced the guests, her fellow Councillors and the Parish Clerk and advised that there would be time at the end of the meeting for questions and refreshments.

Mrs Gold assured those present that the Parish Council had as always been working tirelessly on behalf of the residents of Cold Norton, advising that the Village Hall Project is almost at an end and that the Parish Councillors had spent much of the very cold winter months at Purleigh Pavilion for the Parish Council meetings – Mrs Gold thanked her fellow Councillors for braving the icy conditions and the cold to attend the meetings in particular in December and January, keeping hats and gloves on during meetings!! Mrs Gold advised that she would be asking Philip Wakeling to speak on behalf of the Parish Council about the Village Hall Project later in the meeting.

The Chairman continued by saying that in May 2009 Mr Paul Guppy was unanimously elected to be Chair of the Parish Council and had taken a real interest in the post and should be thanked for being so proactive in dealing with issues such as the children's playground and the re-opening of The Norton. But, that unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond

control of the Parish Council that Mr Guppy felt he could not continue to be a Parish Councillor and resigned in November 2009. However, Mr Guppy continued to play a major part in the Village Hall refurbishment and needs to be thanked for his time and effort. Mrs Gold reminded everyone that those working on the Village Hall Project have volunteered their time freely and that in Mr Wakeling's case whilst also working full time - Mrs Gold congratulated Mr Wakeling for the fantastic job that he has done.

Mrs Gold continued by talking briefly about **financial matters** and advised that this year the precept had been set at £20,500 – the first time there had been an increase for a few years, which was a reflection of the fact that prices had gone up across the board and that the Parish Council was making a contribution towards the Village Hall Project and to this end a Public Works Board Loan had been agreed for £20,000. Mrs Gold advised that as at 31st March 2010 there was £28,255.92 in the Parish Council accounts, which included monies from grants etc that are earmarked for the Village Hall Project (a summary of the Parish Council's budget breakdown to 31st March 2010 was available to view at the meeting).

Moving onto **planning applications** Mrs Gold advised that the Parish Council had considered 38 applications, and that 70% of the decisions made by Cold Norton Councillors had been upheld by the District Council, that 5 applications did not meet with Maldon District Council's approval and that a decision was still awaited on three applications.

The Chairman then went on to advise that the **allotments** had now come under the ownership of the Parish Council, which it is very proud of, as they are a very lovely aspect of our village – thanks were given to all those concerned.

Next Mrs Gold turned her attention to **footpaths**, advising that Mr Roger Hawes continued to be the P3 (Parish Paths Partnership) representative for Cold Norton and that the Parish Council is currently working on creating a footpath map for Cold Norton. Mrs Gold thanked Mr Hawes for giving his time freely and for all his efforts. Mrs Gold advised that there had been success regarding footpaths as in the past twelve months the one behind Latchingdon Road had finally been recognised as a footpath for inclusion on the definitive footpath map.

The **children's enclosed play area** was the next topic of the Chairman's report, which had unfortunately been victim to vandals again – the fencing had been knocked down on numerous occasions. Mrs Gold advised that the Parish Council is looking at replacing the fencing with possibly metal fencing, but that there is a matter of finance and that the Councillors are always mindful of the costs.

In relation to **highways**, Mrs Gold went on to say that following a particularly harsh winter that the Parish Council is aware that the roads are not what they should be and that the Council is in contact with Essex County Council Highways Department with regards to pot holes and resurfacing. Mrs Gold advised that pram ramps had recently been installed at the bridge and also at St. Stephens Road, and that a new 'rural style' directional sign had replaced the number of more 'urban style' signs at the corner of Hackmans Lane and Howe Green Road.

The final topic Mrs Gold spoke about was the **Parish Plan** – advising that the Parish Council is still looking for volunteers from the village community to form a committee. The last parish plan took place in 2000, resulting in the Village Hall refurbishments and the Parish Council feel it is now time for another. Mrs Gold explained that ideally the committee should have a number of people on it from different walks of life and in particular different age groups – Mrs Gold advised anyone interested to contact the Parish Clerk.

Finally, Mrs Gold reminded everyone that the Public is very welcome to attend **Parish Council meetings** which generally take place on the first Wednesday of the month in the village hall.

Mrs Gold then handed over to Mr. Wakeling to talk about the Village Hall Project

THE VILLAGE HALL PROJECT – MR. PHILIP WAKELING

Mr Wakeling started off by thanking '**the team**' involved from the start of the project in 2000, namely Mrs Mary Bryant, Mrs Sue Garnham and Professor Barclay. Mrs Bryant researched the grants aspect, with Mrs Garnham and Professor Barclay involved in the legal side of matters, Mr Roger Hawes joined the team and completed the very lengthy (in pages and time!!) and comprehensive application to The Big Lottery for a grant of £348,500. At the time of our application there was a fund of £50 million available to be granted for 'good causes', but there were 550 applicants!!!

Mr Wakeling went on to thank all those involved in many years of **fund raising** by all members of the Village Hall Management Committee, both past and present, in particular Mrs Chris Edwards, Mrs Viv Hann and Mrs Carole Kirk, who had visited all homes in the village to invite residents to 'buy a brick' and to have their name recorded at the 'new hall'. Mr Wakeling advised that the 'donor board' would be installed very shortly. Mr Wakeling also thanked Mr Paul Guppy for all his time and assistance on this project. Thanks were given to everyone who had helped in bringing this project to fruition, especially those who had attended the fund raising events over many years.

Mr Wakeling advised that on 4th May 2010 a delegation from **The Big Lottery** had visited the 'new' hall and expressed their pleasure with the end result and that the 'Certificate of Completion' had also been signed off on that day, but that the retention monies will not be handed over until May 2011, subject to completion of all snagging items and a final inspection. Regular users are now returning to the hall and so far all feedback has been very positive.

With regards to **Cherry Blossom Lane**, Mr Wakeling advised that works to this road had never been part of the Village Hall project, but the contractor had filled in pot holes and had created a defined edge to the village hall car park. Mr Wakeling acknowledged that the road is used mainly by hall users and suggested that the Village Hall Management Committee may like to think about ways to work with the residents.

The next element of this project covered was the **financial aspects**. Mr Wakeling advised that whilst there had been a contingency within the budget for this project, this had been used up on a variety of different factors including the high cost of removing and transporting asbestos discovered on the site, having to pay VAT in relation to the contribution made by the Village Hall Management Committee from various fund raising events, £3,500 to refurbish the hall floor and replacing the gutters and down pipes and carrying out high level redecoration, but Mr Wakeling pointed out that this will ensure that these areas are maintenance free for 5-10 years. In 6 – 8 weeks the final costs for this project should be known and therefore the over/under spend – at the present time it is calculated that the project is over by c £1,400.

Mr Wakeling concluded by advising that **reports** will have to be made to The Big Lottery at 6 months and at one year after completion to advise new usage in relation to the milestones and targets set which reflect back to the reasons why the expansion and renovation works were required.

REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR MR. JOHN ARCHER

Mr. Archer started off his report talking about **financial matters**, advising that in terms of the Council Tax, Maldon District Council is again one of lowest in Essex, but that MDC is having to take money out of reserves to maintain the low increase.

In respect of **Promenade Park** Mr. Archer advised that MDC are planning to charge for children to use the Splash Park which is very popular with the youngsters.

Reporting on **Bradwell Power Station**, which is now decommissioned, Mr. Archer advised that at this stage it is not known if Bradwell 2 will go ahead; Maldon District Council is in favour of Bradwell 2, but it seems at this time that Sizewell is more likely to proceed.

Mr. Archer's next topic also related to sources of power – **wind farms** – advising that Maldon District will not be spending any more tax payers money to fight another appeal – so it is likely that at least one wind farm will go ahead. Mr. Archer advised that an application for another wind farm is expected this year.

In regards to the **Crossrail Project** Mr Archer said that if this does proceed, that the earliest date to start is now 2012.

Mr. Archer finished his report by advising that renovation works on **Stow Maries Aerodrome** had stopped as unfortunately the new owner was seriously ill.

COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT – COUNTY COUNCILLOR MRS PENNY CHANNER

Cllr Mrs Channer started by advising that Essex County Council had confirmed its determination to set a low **council tax** - 1.9% - which was its lowest increase since the tax was introduced and that the Council is working hard to be ready for a nationally difficult climate, but has maintained its activities to achieve its goal to have the best quality of life in Britain.

In regards to **finance** Cllr Mrs Channer advised that in December 2009 ECC had selected IBM as a strategic partner to help the Council deliver its ambitious programme of world class services and outstanding value for money – aiming to save £300 million over the next three years in operational and purchasing costs. The Council's goal is to save costs rather than cut services during these harsh financial times for the County.

Adults, health and community wellbeing – Cllr Mrs Channer reported that in the recent annual performance assessment the service had been rated as 'performing well' and that Essex's Adult Community Learning Service had been awarded National Beacon Status for outstanding service and professionalism. Cllr Mrs Channer advised that Essex Cares, a traded company designed to improve how ECC delivered adult social care, had been launched and is delivering more for the same money and that Telecare equipment and support to the over 85s had been positively received and to date more than 2,800 had been taken up – this service has now been extended to the over 80s.

The next area Cllr Mrs Channer reported on related to **schools, children and families**, advising that due to a major IT initiative across the county's 470 primary schools now all had enhanced secure e-mail and attendance reporting. Regarding the major programme designed to rebuild or remodel every state secondary school in the UK, Cllr Mrs Channer advised that Skanska RM was ECC's preferred bidder. A major recruitment campaign has been launched for foster carers.

Cllr Mrs Channer's next topic covered **highways and transport**: Regarding inclement weather ECC organised the nation's only 'Snow Summit' to share international experience from government and industry and to consider new ways of working and how more can be done with partners and the public. During the snowy weather in Essex all deliveries of 'meals on wheels' were made and the County launched a 'winter twitter' service to keep people updated on roads conditions. Additionally the County has launched a patrol service in partnership with the Police to help clear accidents on the A12 and keep it flowing and has invested £10 million in maintaining and upgrading 1,100 roads and footways. ECC continues to support c 280 bus services and had recently introduced a trial of shopper bus services with Braintree Community Transport to support rural villages.

Moving onto **the economy**, Cllr Mrs Channer reported that in the first comprehensive area assessment, Essex is reported to be responding excellently to the recession, due to the following: 'Banking on Essex' had made credit available to a number of small businesses in Essex, which won praise from the Audit Commission; Countrywide Apprentices had taken off and the Council had recently extended its initial 1,000 places to 1,750 by 2012; 10 rural Post Offices had been reopened; £2million had been allocated to a fund under the 'Essex Community Foundation' to promote the third sector; and the Council is supporting Essex Savers – a countywide credit union helping people borrow and save locally.

Cllr Mrs Channer concluded her report by briefly reporting on '**community leadership**', advising that a Village Agents service was launched in October 2009 to improve elderly residents' access to health and wellbeing services, that The Essex Rural Commission had unveiled an insightful report with 123 priority areas for action and that ECC had been awarded Beacon status for the County's work in encouraging communities to be more active through the 2012 Olympic Games legacy.

ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE POLICE

Police Sergeant Phil Morley had supplied a written Annual Report for Cold Norton 2009/10:

Cold Norton forms part of the Purleigh Policing area which sits within the Maldon Neighbourhood Policing District. The Cold Norton Beat has a dedicated Neighbourhood Specialist Officer, PC 2999 Tony England, and a Police Community Support Officer, PCSO Richard Stott.

During the period of the 1st of April 2009 to 31st of March 2010 the Maldon District has seen 2369 Reported Crimes; the Purleigh Beat has had 81 Reported Crimes. For the same period the previous year there were 2336 Reported Crimes in the Maldon District and 87 for the Purleigh Beat. This shows a decrease in Crime across the District of 107 offences and a small decrease for the Purleigh area.

The Purleigh area has seen a significant drop in the number of Dwelling Burglaries from 13 to 5. The offences that have increased are Theft from Motor Vehicle (an additional eight offences) and 'Offences against the Person' (an additional three offences).

The past year has seen an increase in three particular offences across the Maldon District. These being:

- *Burglary (of dwellings and Sheds / Garages)*
- *Thefts from Motor Vehicle*
- *Theft of Lead*

A lot of these have been opportunist crime i.e. vehicles, garages left insecure or with valuable items left on display. This type of crime is easy to prevent by securing property and making sure that items of value are removed from vehicles or at least hidden away from sight.

With the price of scrap metal on the increase the District has seen a rise in the number of offences of Theft. The most commonly affected premises are those related to Education, Churches and Sports facilities, all of which are unoccupied at night or for regular periods of time. That said we have also seen some Houses being targeted for these types of offences as well.

The Neighbourhood Policing Team has teamed up with One Place in Burnham to provide mobile surgeries throughout the Maldon District on a monthly basis. This means that once a month the Mobile Police Station will visit the village and will be staffed by Police and staff

from One Place who can offer advice and assistance on a wide range of things from applying for bus passes to housing enquiries. Please do come and visit us and let us know of any problems you are experiencing in your area.

Additionally at the meeting PCSO Stott advised that in the year in question that there had been 4 burglaries in Cold Norton (a total of 6 crimes in the village) and that a big problem in the district so far in 2010 had been the theft of BT cabling – the Police are working closely with BT to prevent this from continuing.

QUESTIONS

At the end of the reports there was an open session of questions and discussions.

Question 1: this related to the 2 plots of **land for sale along Latchingdon Road**: Mrs Gold advised that this land is outside the development boundary and is agricultural land.

Question 2: raised the topic of **travellers** taking up residency on open land: Mr Archer responded that the Enforcement Officer at the District Council is keeping a watchful brief on this in the district and reviewing on a daily basis.

Question 3: referred to **Cowpiece** and the fact that it is overgrown at present: Mr Litscher advised that plans are in hand to clear the area and that a working party will be required to assist and any help would be most welcome.

Question 4: related to **speeding** cars through the village: Mrs Gold advised that the Parish Council were in contact with the Police re this and periodically mobile speed checks were made and culprits duly fined.

Question 5: was asked in relation to the removal of the **gate** that had been installed in the playground fence behind the swings/slide leading directly onto Cherry Blossom Lane as a temporary measure during works to the Village Hall: Mr Wakeling advised that it is proposed to remove this gate and replace it with fencing as before.

Question 6: was asked in relation to a **communication mast** in Cold Norton: Mr Archer advised that no approach had been made, but that an approach had been made to install one in North Fambridge, but had been refused.

The meeting was then closed at 8.40pm - all present were invited to stay for refreshments, and advised that the Councillors and Guests would all be available to talk to on an informal basis.

Chairman..... Date.....