



## ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19



## HOCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL



## ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT** The new Council year has come around and the Annual Report aims to summarise the progress of Hockley Parish Council over the past year, during which we have had to overcome several challenges. I would like to express thanks to my Vice Chairman Cllr Veronica Randall, my fellow councillors and all our staff who together form part of a team who have shown commitment, professionalism and support. During the year we have appointed a new Clerk, Mrs Kelly Holland, and Mrs Margaret Saunders joined us to take on the post of Responsible Financial Officer. Their combined experience and insight have already proved invaluable within the office and Council and we are now moving forward.

Hockley Parish Council is currently at full strength with 15 members serving the community. It is run through a committee structure to manage local services and develop projects to meet the needs and priorities of the residents, which ensures the council meets its statutory functions. The Full Council then approves the committee recommendations and actions are progressed. In addition we have members who are delegated to work with outside organisations and groups. This may sound very formal and indeed it has to be, so that democracy can be seen to be done in a consistent manner. However, that does not stop us from being a very approachable group of people who all live in the community and donate many hours of their free time addressing village day-to-day issues and activities, Over development; not enough parking; speeding traffic; overhanging trees; not enough bins on open spaces; street lights failures; inconsiderate parking; anti social behaviour - these are just a handful of the comments and complaints we receive which are common to all Parish Councils. In most matters we could be described as "waving our hands in the dark" but we do have powers to act in law and, where we can, aim to improve things and certainly try to liaise with other organisations to help in as many areas as possible.

Essex County Council published their 2019-2024 Libraries Strategy Consultation in November 2018 and a strong challenge to the proposed downgrading of our library was launched by the local community and the Parish Council supported by our MP and County Councillor. However, despite everyone's best efforts the opposition was voted down in March. We are now awaiting the outcome of the consultation analysis and, where possible, the Parish Council will continue to maintain pressure on the County Council to retain a fully funded library service in Hockley.

### OUR COMMITTEES

**The Resources & Procedures Committee is responsible for coordinating the Parish Council's budgetary process and recommends a Precept to cover the annual expenditure of the Council which is determined at a Council meeting in January each year.** Rochford District Council must provide sufficient funds to cover the budget, which is called the Precept. This money is sourced from the Council Tax which all residents have to pay and Hockley Parish Council has maintained its Precept at its current level for the last 6 years. A significant part of the Parish Council expenditure goes towards keeping the village environs in a satisfactory condition. This last year we were offered land for a new allotment site and agreed to take on the maintenance of the public toilets in Southend Road; both projects have been budgeted for in our earmarked reserves. Along with a reduction in the Council Tax Support Grant from Central Government this inevitably led to an increase. **The Precept requested for 2019-20 is £267,184** which equates to an increase of £8.05pa on the Parish proportion of the Council Tax, and a Band D property will only pay an extra 67 pence a month per household. I am pleased to confirm that the External Auditors have 'signed off' the 2017/18 accounts and the unaudited accounts for the year, ending March 2019 have recently been cleared by our Internal Auditor. A full breakdown of the Budget for Precept for 2018-19 will therefore shortly be available on our website or can be obtained from the Parish Office on request.



**The Environment & Open Spaces Committee advises on the long-term management of open spaces owned or managed by the council.** All the committee members and especially our maintenance team work extremely hard to maintain our village. The developer at the Pond Chase Nursery site in Folly Lane has allocated land for allotments, and work is underway to transfer this to the Parish Council. A Working Group of councillors and residents has been formed and following several site visits, boundaries, parking places and a water source have already been established. The Parish Council has a waiting list and plots will be limited to Hockley residents on a first come first served basis, but it is an encouraging start after such a long wait for this amenity. The Marylands Nature Reserve 5 year regeneration plan continues apace and results are becoming visible as the seasons progress. Laburnum Grove and Plumberow Childrens' Play Spaces have been inspected and are considered to be safe. However the council wishes to update the play spaces and is looking into a programme of refurbishment/replacement of equipment which will be in consultation with the community so our youngsters can continue to enjoy outdoor activities. The Parish Council has entered into a new contract this year for the maintenance of the parish owned street lighting and a full review of the existing lights is under way to improve performance and save costs.

**The Planning & Local Development Committee considers and makes recommendations throughout the year to the Planning Authority, Rochford District Council on planning applications and development briefs received.** Continued over-development in the area is a concern to us all. As a consultee, the Parish Council cannot prevent a development from taking place, but its recommendations do form a mechanism for a local response. Over the past year this committee has commented on some 87 planning applications and supported representations from the community on the impact over-development is having on our environment. Anyone who wishes to express their views on a planning matter is welcome to attend the meetings.

**The Communities Committee advises the council on the needs and requirements of the community including events, recommending ways to match council resources to community needs.** In response to public demand the Parish Council has agreed to take over the maintenance of the public toilets in Southend Road to ensure the facilities are retained in Hockley. The toilets will be handed over by Rochford District Council after a full refurbishment has been completed and we are currently finalising the lease with the District Council. To support the police and the community, the Parish Council has agreed to investigate funding a Police Special Constable or use private security services to help alleviate crime and increasing anti-social behaviour in Hockley. The Council's 5th Art Trail was held in June and enabled 30 local artists to display their craft at venues around the Village. Two of our artists were selected to exhibit at Harwich which hosted the launch of Essex Summer of Art in 2018. Many residents and visitors enjoyed the exhibitions and our thanks go to Hockley businesses and the library for allowing us to use their venues. On 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018 the country marked the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of the First World War and the community of Hockley answered the Parish Council's call for knitted poppies. We received over 3000 poppies which were displayed at the War Memorials in Southend Road and Greensward Lane. The anniversary attracted the largest gathering of people since the War Memorial was dedicated in 2008. At 10pm on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019 the War Memorial will again be illuminated to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the D-Day Landings. There will also be a special art display outside the Parish Hall. For many years the Parish Council has sponsored and maintained the Festive Lights and Christmas tree in Hockley, and shared the community's disappointment at not being able to hold the Street Event in 2018. We are pleased to be able to announce that the festive lights will be switched on this year on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and, working with the Hockley Chamber of Trade, the council intends to have a street event in Spa Road again. More details will be available shortly. We hope the community will continue to support the event and if you would like to take part please contact the Parish Office.

The Council recognises the importance of engaging with the community and that good communication is essential. To this end, alongside our Website and Newsletter, we are setting up a new Face Book Page to publicise our activities and involve the community. We hope you find this to be a useful resource, which allows you to discover more about how the Parish Council works and the services we are able to provide. Your Parish Council is here to work with the community and appreciates the support of our residents. If you have any issues or ideas for improvements to our services which you wish us to consider we would very much like to hear from you. Please do not hesitate to contact the Clerk or approach any one of our members who will be able to bring these to the attention of the council. We look forward to moving into 2019-20 and, where we can, having a positive impact on village life.

**Councillor Roy Martin**  
**Chairman**

## **YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS**

### **HOCKLEY WEST WARD**

Cllrs Mark Anderson, Steve Chelmsford, Tim Gleadall, Brian Hazlewood, Shirley James,  
Roy Martin (Chairman), Sue Martin, Phil Meacham,  
Veronica Randall (Vice Chairman), Barbara Thorogood.

### **HOCKLEY EAST WARD**

Cllrs: Nick Boxall, Mike Carter, Toni Carter, Brian O'Shea, Lesley Vingoe.

### **Committee Membership 2018-19**

**(Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council are Ex Officio members  
of all Committees with the exception of Personnel)**

**Resources & Procedures Committee:** Cllr Roy Martin (Chair),

Members: Mark Anderson, Nick Boxall, Shirley James, Sue Martin, Phil Meacham, Veronica Randall,  
Lesley Vingoe.

**Planning & Local Development Committee:** Cllr Tim Gleadall (Chair),

Members: Nick Boxall, Mike Carter, Toni Carter, Steve Chelmsford, Shirley James,  
Barbara Thorogood.

**Environment & Open Spaces Committee:** Cllr Lesley Vingoe (Chair)

Members: Mark Anderson, Nick Boxall, Tim Gleadall, Brian Hazlewood, Shirley James, Brian O'Shea,  
Barbara Thorogood

**Communities Committee:** Cllr Sue Martin (Chair),

Members: Mark Anderson, Mike Carter, Toni Carter, Tim Gleadall, Shirley James, Roy Martin,  
Phil Meacham, Veronica Randall, Barbara Thorogood, Lesley Vingoe.

**Festive Lights Sub Committee:** Cllr Barbara Thorogood (Chair),

Members: Mark Anderson, Nick Boxall, Toni Carter, Steve Chelmsford, Tim Gleadall, Shirley James,  
Sue Martin, Veronica Randall

**Personnel Committee:** Cllr Nick Boxall (Chair),

Members: Mike Carter, Toni Carter, Shirley James, Sue Martin, Phil Meacham, Brian O'Shea,  
Veronica Randall, Lesley Vingoe.



**If you have any comments or enquiries, please contact Clerk to the Parish Council**  
**Phone: 01702 20 77 07 : Email: [enquiries@hockley-essex.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@hockley-essex.gov.uk) : Website: [hockley-essex.gov.uk](http://hockley-essex.gov.uk)**

**Please address all correspondence to:**

**The Old Fire Station 58 Southend Road Hockley Essex SS5 4QH**