

Hockley Parish Council

Annual Report

2023 - 2024



Chairman Councillor Barbara Thorogood



My second year in the office of Chairman began with a celebration of the King's Coronation, which was an enjoyable fun day held at Hockley Community Centre on a beautiful sunny.

Unfortunately, Hockley experienced numerous bouts of roadworks throughout the year giving us the nickname of 'Blockley'. The parish council has no power

on when or where roadworks take place or have direct contact with Essex County Council. We can report highways and street lighting issues on behalf residents but the procedure used is the same as that available to the public. Residents are encouraged to report any fault or defect directly to Highways as they will then be able to track progress.

Parish Council meetings are open to the public with agendas published 3 days before each meeting and residents are welcome to attend. Meetings have time allocated for public participation, giving residents the opportunity to raise a point on any item on the agenda or covered by the committees' terms of reference.

The Parish Council continues to work in partnership with Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service providing Weekly Baby Weighing Sessions at the Old Fire Station. This service has proved very popular with residents who in the past had to travel to a neighbouring area. The parish hall has been used by other public agencies free of charge including Essex Police whose Community Team use it as a local hub.

Lastly I would like to thank Councillors and Staff for their support during this time.



Hockley Parish Councillors:

Barbara Thorogood
Sue Martin
Toni Carter
Mike Carter
James Hedges
Andy Macpherson
Adrian Eves
Brian Hazlewood
Andrea Styles
Eileen Gadsdon
Phil Meacham
Nick Boxall
Chris Taylor
Lorraine Ridley
Phil Meacham

Join our Team

Anyone interested in becoming a Hockley Parish Councillor can obtain the necessary papers from Rochford District Council. The process and time line will be displayed on the Parish Council noticeboard and website when made available.

Hockley Parish Council, The Old Fire Station, 58 Southend Road, Hockley, Essex. SS5 4QH

Email: enquiries@hockley-essex.gov.uk Telephone: 01702 207707

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EVENTS COMMITTEE

This committee is allocated an annual budget of £40,000, which includes the installation of the village Christmas Lighting displays and street event. This year to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III the council also organised a summer fayre in June at Hockley Community Centre which proved very popular on what turned out to be one of the hottest days of the year.



The Remembrance Day Service was held at the War Memorial in Southend Road in November. The Parish Council would like to thank local residents and the groups who volunteered their support; in particular Bernie Cross the Royal British Legion Standard Bearer who was retiring after many years of loyal service. This was closely followed by the popular switch on of the Christmas Lights in the village. This is the second year of a new 3-year festive lighting scheme funded by the parish council which gives us flexibility to change the displays if required. We are grateful to The Christmas Tree Farm who again sponsored the beautiful Christmas tree in Southend Road and to all the visitors, stallholders and businesses who make the street event such a success.

In 2023, the council applied for a grant from Rochford District Council under the Government Levelling Up Scheme to encourage footfall in our local towns and villages. As the grant was to be spent on art, the Committee commissioned a new community mosaic. Details were circulated to local schools and community groups asking for images depicting their view of Hockley which are being turned into mosaic tiles. These are being incorporated into one larger mosaic to be installed on the outside wall of the parish council owned public toilets building in Southend Road as part of the Rochford Art Trail.

PLANNING AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Parish and Town Councils are statutory consultees for planning applications received by Rochford District Council. Residents can attend any parish council meeting and comments on proposed local development can be submitted to the District Council's Planning Committee for consideration

FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance and Governance Committee has delegated authority to make financial decisions on behalf of the Council; overseeing and recommending the Annual Budget and Precept to Council and reviewing the quarterly Income and Expenditure reports. The Committee are also responsible for ensuring that the Council operate lawfully on current policies and procedures.

The Parish Council agreed a Precept for 2024 / 2025 of £412,600 this equates to an increase of £6.91pa annum. equivalent to 57p pm on a band D property. This increase is to cover rising statutory operating costs and includes upgrading the remaining 193 Parish Council owned street lamps from sodium to LED at cost of £96,500. It is vital the lamp columns work efficiently to help reduce crime. The maintenance of the public toilets has come from reserves in previous years and is now incorporated into the Budget. In addition to this, urgent maintenance work is required at the Plumberow Playspace to enable its safe use for the children.



The Council has established a Community Grant fund of up to £5,000 where voluntary and community groups can apply for financial support. Applications are reviewed in March and September. If you would like to apply for support with a project, the grant policy and application form can be found via the website <https://www.hockley-essex.gov.uk/the-parish/grant-awards/> The following

community grants have been awarded this year:

- The London Bus Theatre Company £1,000 who provide drama workshops in local schools addressing issues such as bullying, drugs, alcohol and antisocial behaviour and job interview techniques.

- Hockley Bowls Club, £2,000 towards new wheelchair access and toilet facilities Hockley Bowls Club, £2,000 towards new wheelchair access and toilet facilities



Hockley Community Centre were also awarded a grant in the previous year towards an outside defibrillator which was installed in August 2023.

ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

A topic which residents will be aware has been on the Parish Council Environment agenda for some time is the provision of allotments. When the new properties were built in Folly Lane, the Parish Council were instructed under a planning condition that allotments will be provided on the land although no funding was forwarded to fund this. This has been a very long process due to external factors beyond the Councils control. Currently the Parish Council's solicitors are liaising with Land Registry for the transfer of the land, this is anticipated to be completed by June. Following this the Council will obtain quotations on creating a site within the parameters stipulated by the Badger Protection Agency. Once these prices are obtained the Parish Council will discuss whether the project can be carried forward.



The Parish Council continue to fund the public toilets located in Southend Road, and an annual budget of £15,000 is allocated to maintain the facilities.

Environment Committee fund hanging summer baskets and all year-round planter displays in Spa Road, Southend Road and Broad Parade. Sponsorship is encouraged

The Parish Council own and maintain two play spaces, these are located at Plumberow Avenue and Laburnum Grove. This year two new pieces of equipment have been installed at Plumberow. Some equipment has been removed due to safety issues. The Council are currently obtaining prices for the replacement of the equipment. The areas have now been reseeded to enable them to be enjoyed for picnics in the warmer weather. The Parish Council also fund the daily locking and unlocking of the play areas to help eliminate anti-social behaviour, in addition to this both play areas have weekly play inspections carried out by a Rospa qualified inspector.

The project to replace the existing parish owned lighting with LED units will continue over the next year to help keep Hockley safer.

With spring on the way, the Environment and Open spaces are supporting the Hedgehog Highway Project, The current population of hedgehogs in the UK is less than 1 million, compared with 30 million in the 1950s Hedgehogs roam up to 2 miles each night and therefore it is critical that there are gaps within fencing to allow the hedgehogs through. If you would like a hedgehog highway please contact the Parish Council at enquiries@hockley-essex.gov.uk, We have 50 highways to give away.



Essex Police hold regular events across the district every month, to give our community the opportunity to speak to an officer face to face.

The events are detailed on the Essex Police website and Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/EPRochford>

Here are a few dates for your diary...

BEAT SURGERY

12 Mar – The Megacentre – 12:00 – 2:00pm

12 Mar – Asda Rayleigh – 2:30pm – 4:30pm

COMMUNITY MEETS

14 Mar - The Mill Arts & Event Centre - 10:45am to 11:45pm

19 Mar - Gossip of Gt Wakering - 10am to 11am

19 Mar - Rochford Banking Hub—10:45am to 11:45am

20 Mar - Hullbridge Council Office - 10am to 11am

21 Mar - Costa - Cherry Orchard - 2:30pm to 3:30pm

22 Mar - Co-op, Spa Rd, Hockley - 10am to 12pm

Please note, all events are subject to change
due to operational policing demand.



We're offering more ways of keeping you up to date with our work across Rochford District through our weekly e-newsletter, called Dispatch.

Every Wednesday, our local Dispatch provides our communities with a weekly overview of district news, along with crime prevention advice, information of upcoming events and much more.

Try for free online and unsubscribe at any time by visiting: Essex Police Dispatch or scan the QR code

Councillor Attendance at Meetings

Meeting Total		FC=7	A	F&G=4	A	P=9	A	E=3	A	CE=3	A	Total
Councillor	Committee											
Thorogood	FC/F&G/P/E/CE	7	0	4	0	9	0	2	1	3	0	25
Martin	FC/F&G/CE	7	0	4	0	Ex-9	0	Ex-2	0	3	0	25
Hedges	FC/F&G/P/E/CE	6	1	4	0	7	2	3	0	3	0	23
Eves	FC/F&G/P/E	6	1	4	0	7	2	2	1	0	0	19
MacPherson	FC/F&G/E	6	1	4	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	13
Hazlewood	FC/P/C/E	7	0	0	0	9	0	3	0	2	1	21
T Carter	FC/CE	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	7
M Carter	FC/P	6	1	0	0	7	2	0	0	0	0	13
Gadsdon	FC/CE/F&G/P	4	3	3	1	8	1	0	0	3	0	18
Taylor	FC	7	0	Ex-2	0	E-1	0	0	0	Ex-1	0	11
Meacham	FC	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Boxall	FC/E	4	3	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	6
Styles	FC/CE/F&G/P	4	1	2	1	4	1	0	0	2	0	12
Ridley elected Sept 23	FC	3	1	Ex-2	0	0	0	0	0	Ex-2	0	7
Osborne elected Sept 23	FC	2	2	0	0	Ex1		0	0	0	0	3

FC= - Full Council
F&G - Finance & Governance
P – Planning
A – Apologies given

CE – Community Engagement
E – Environment & Open spaces
Ex= Attends meeting but not on committee/ how many attended