



# Heybridge Parish Council

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**1<sup>st</sup> APRIL 2016 to  
31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2017**

## Contact Details

### Parish Councillors

Sofia Bishop  
50 Rowan Drive  
Heybridge

Simon Burwood  
104 Long Common  
Heybridge

Trevor Cable  
Hillary Close  
Heybridge

Michael Edwards  
8 Doubleday Drive  
Heybridge

Tina Gentry  
102 Wagtail Drive  
Heybridge

Bernard Hall  
145 Holloway Road  
Heybridge

Ashley Jones  
99 Goldhanger Road  
Heybridge

Keith Lawson  
2 Chapel Lane  
Heybridge Basin

Natalie Lewis  
24 Beeches Road  
Heybridge

Richard Perry  
Mill House Hotel  
Langford

Prof Lew Schnurr  
42 Basin Road  
Heybridge Basin

Gary Young  
6 Mayland Close  
Heybridge

### District Councillors

Anne Beale (Heybridge East)  
93 Hillary Close  
Heybridge

Bryan Harker (Heybridge East)  
32 Wagtail Drive  
Heybridge

Ian Dobson (Heybridge West)  
6 Emperor Close  
Heybridge

Miriam Lewis (Heybridge West)  
24 Beeches Road  
Heybridge

### County Councillor

Rodney Bass  
Five Corners  
Maypole Road  
Wickham Bishops

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT MUNICIPAL YEAR 2016 – 2017

## 1 Overview

1.1 Heybridge Parish Council plays an important role at the grassroots level of Local Government (Tier One), directly representing and promoting the interests of its community.

In addition to the Councillors, who are your unpaid representatives, the Parish Council employs a Clerk (see 1.6) to carry out its business and ensure that the many statutory requirements of the Parish Council are met.

The Clerk manages the Parish Council business such as financial matters, employee supervision, minutes, meeting arrangements, paperwork, agendas etc as well as the management of Plantation Hall, King George V Playing fields and other areas of responsibility (see 4.1).

An election is held every four years and qualified persons nominate themselves for office. When an election is held, a council will be voted in to serve the electorate of the parish. If during the four year period there is a vacancy, due to a resignation or other reason, the position is advertised. Should no-one come forward for election, the Parish Council is permitted to co-opt someone to fill the vacancy.

Funding for Parish Council activities is by precept, levied by Maldon District Council as part of their District property tax. Our share is then collected from households within the village as part of the Council Tax payments.

The Parish Council is non-political. It is solely involved in issues, items and developments for the village's benefit and well-being. Decisions are decided by vote. Each Councillor has one vote with the Chairman of the Parish Council also having a casting vote, if required.

The Parish Council can refer matters they consider requiring action – such as issues concerning the local environment, highways, footpaths, policing etc to Maldon District Council or Essex County Council, for their attention.

The Parish Council has certain powers across the Parish which it may use to help provide services and facilities for the residents. It may also act as a “ Pressure Group ” and discuss with the District and County Councils in order ***to try to get things done!***

The Parish Council deals with local people and local matters on a day to day basis and welcomes help and interest. One way to get involved in local community matters is to stand for election to the Parish Council.

Attendance by the public at Parish Council meetings is also welcomed. Contact details and meeting dates are published on the Parish Council's website as are our Policies and Procedures and the Register of Parish Councillors Interests.

The Parish Council has been awarded both the Foundation and the Quality Award status of The Local Council Award Scheme. The Foundation Award is for Councils who want to show they meet a set of minimum standards to deliver effectively for their communities. To meet this award the Council demonstrated that it has the required documentation and information in place for operating lawfully and according to standard practice. The Quality Award involves Good Governance, The Council's role in the Community and further improvement through the management and development of staff and Councillors. It is worth noting that Heybridge Parish Council is only one of a very few Councils in the County of Essex that has achieved this status; our thanks to our staff and Clerk for this result.

1.2 I was elected Chairman of Heybridge Parish Council in May 2016 for the sixth year running. The Parish Council is a local authority under the terms of the Local Government Act 1972 and came into operation on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1987 following the creation of the civil parish of Heybridge in 1986. It consists of twelve members (Parish Councillors) who are elected every four years. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman are elected by the Parish Council at its Statutory Annual Meeting in May.

1.3 Heybridge Parish Council has a variety of roles. It has direct responsibility for various land, property, amenity areas and car parks within Heybridge and Heybridge Basin and is consulted on a wide variety of topics, where it will express views and exert influence whenever the interests of Heybridge and its residents are affected.

1.4 In addition to the Council itself the Parish Council delegates certain of its functions to the Planning Committee, Budget Committee, Personnel Committee, Events Committee and the Environment and Resources Committee, members of which are appointed each year at the Statutory Annual Meeting in May.

1.5 During the last municipal year, I also held the post of Chairman of the Personnel Committee, Councillor Prof Lew Schnurr was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council, Chairman of the Budget Committee and Chairman of the Planning Committee, Councillor Gary Young was appointed chairman of the Events Committee and Councillor Simon Burwood was appointed Chairman of the Environment and Resources Committee.

1.6 Laurie Wiebe CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration) is the Parish Council Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer and the Parish Emergency Co-ordinator. John Williams acts for the Council as the internal Auditor and Janice Martin is our financial contractor.

1.7 The Parish Council office at Plantation Hall is manned Mondays – Fridays between 08.00 hrs and 15.00 hrs. Amanda Hilton is our part time administration assistant, Nicky Percy is our day caretaker, Denise Kemp is our evenings and weekend caretaker and Tony Powell is our relief caretaker. In addition Les Hammans is our Tree Warden.

Our admin assistant, day, evening/weekend and relief caretakers are qualified fire marshals and our admin assistant, day, evening/weekend, relief caretakers, and our Clerk are qualified first aiders. In addition our admin assistant and day caretaker

have completed Level 2 in Health & Safety and our admin assistant has completed Level 2 in Risk Assessment.

Our gardener, Keith Locke, after many years of service has decided to move on. The Parish Council wishes to thank Keith for his services and wish him well for the future. After the tendering process was carried out a new gardener, Mr Hilton was taken on, starting on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016.

1.8 Anne Beale, Ian Dobson, Bryan Harker, and Miriam Lewis are our District Councillors representing Heybridge and Heybridge Basin. Rodney Bass is our County Councillor.

The Parish Council wishes to thank our County and District Councillors for their hard work in looking after the interests of Heybridge and Heybridge Basin.

The Parish Council continues its membership of the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC), the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE), the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), the RCCE Village Halls Committee, the RCCE Community Led Planning Group, the Chelmer Canal Trust and the Greater Thames Estuary Partnership.

The Parish Council Clerk is a member of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and serves on the SLCC Essex Branch Committee. In addition, the Clerk is a member of the Institute of Local Council Management (ILCM) and the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC). The admin assistant is currently taking the 'Introduction to Local Council Administration' (ILCA) course with a view to becoming our Assistant Clerk on completion.

1.9 The Parish Council has lost a number of Councillors during the last municipal year but others have joined either through by-elections or co-option, and I am pleased to confirm that at the present time we have a full complement of Councillors.

The Parish Council wishes to thank those who have left, for their contribution during this past year and welcomes the new members. There is a lot of work ahead and having a full Council enables us to distribute the responsibilities more evenly.

## **2 Planning, Highways and Environment**

2.1 The Parish Council is notified of all planning applications affecting Heybridge and Heybridge Basin, and due consideration is given to the comments to be submitted to the District Council. Planning Applications are available for inspection thirty minutes prior to the Planning Committee meetings at Plantation Hall.

2.2 During this municipal year over 68 (up to March 17) planning applications were commented on by the Parish Council.

2.3 The Parish Council is well aware of concerns with regards to flooding and loading on the local infrastructure when considering development proposals. The Parish Council has also contributed to the ongoing Local Development Plan (LDP)

and The Maldon Design guide. This sets out the criteria in planning for the Maldon district for the period 2014 - 2029.

2.4 The Parish Council is in the process in producing a Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Planning Task and Finish Working Group, consisting of local businesses, members of the public and Parish Councillors meet on a regular basis; the plan itself is expected to take until Autumn 2018 to complete. It should be noted that the Neighbourhood Plan boundary does not include the North Heybridge Garden Suburb (NHGS). Mainly because half of the NHGS is in the Parish of Great Totham.

2.5 The Parish Council, through its representatives, continues to liaise regularly with Essex County Council on local highway matters. This is carried out via the Highways Panel which meets on a regular basis to discuss highway matters throughout the district. There are a number of issues which the Parish Council have concerns about including speed limits, road signage, special critical street lighting and Village Gateways.

The Parish Council continues to push for reinstatement of the public conveniences at Daisy Meadow car park in Heybridge Basin.

2.6 The hedge alongside Sherpa Path north of the car park at Plantation hall has been relocated and replaced with a new one. The Parish Council wishes to thank the Conservation Volunteers for helping with this project as well as Les Hammans, our Tree Warden, who supervised the project.

2.7 The Parish Council has joined the Maldon & Blackwater Estuary Coastal Community Team whose main aim is to ensure the long term viability of the river estuary and promote its attractions such as tourism and marine activities and to increase visitors to the Maldon District.

2.8 The Parish Council is endeavouring to complete the original arrangements for the Heybridge Lakes to be designated as a Nature Reserve. Discussions are ongoing.

2.9 The Parish Council has also appointed Cllr Simon Burwood as its School Liaison Representative with Heybridge Primary School, Cllr Richard Perry as its Tourism and Leisure representative, Cllr Simon Burwood as its representative on the Elms Farm Conservation Group, Cllr Prof Lew Schnurr as its Passenger Transport representative as well as Health matters and Mr Roger Lankester on marine matters.

### **3 Finance**

3.1 For the Financial Year 2016/2017 the Parish Council has maintained a careful use of resources to remain within Budget. However unexpected costs such as by-elections has forced the Council to reforecast its budget considerably. It is considered both reasonable and prudent for the Parish Council in seeking to absorb a budget deficit to strike a balance between the impact this has on both the precept and the working balances.

3.2 Major expenditure items and projects are always put out to tender to ensure best value for money and transparency in the way the Council works and awards contracts. Major expenditure this year included replacing the flooring in the corridors, toilets and showers. A major project proposed for 2017 – 2018 is to include replacing some of the aging children’s playground equipment at Plantation Hall.

3.3 After review the precept for 2016/17 which is the element of Council Tax covering the Parish Council’s budget requirement was increased to £168,000.00.

#### **4. Direct Responsibilities**

4.1 The Parish Council has responsibility for Plantation Hall, King George V Playing Field, Childrens Play areas at Plantation Hall and Elizabeth Way, Daisy Meadow Car Park at Heybridge Basin, various amenity and grassed verges including at Larch Walk, Rowan Drive, The Roothings, Green lanes, the Horse Trough in The Street, the War Memorial at Heybridge Cemetery, Bus Shelters at Bentalls shopping centre, Goldhanger Road and Basin Road, a number of bench seats, various litter/dog bins and thirty four amenity off-street lighting pillars in locations considered critical to and required by safety concerns, including flooding.

In addition the Parish Council is responsible for the maintenance of the closed Churchyard at St. Andrew’s Church, the surrounds of St. George’s Church at Heybridge Basin and Elms Farm Roundabout.

4.2 Plantation Hall and Playing Fields have a high usage factor with very competitive hire rates ensuring a steady income stream. Due to increased running costs we had to review our hires rates for the 2016 / 2017 financial year but they still remain competitive. The main hall, the two meeting rooms and playing fields are used extensively.

4.3 Due to the current high demand of the Council’s facilities as well as for the future growth of the village the Parish Council decided to investigate the possibility of extending Plantation Hall. A Plantation Hall Extension Public consultation took place in October 2016 to ask members of the public for their views on all aspects of the proposals. After positive comments, an outline planning application was submitted to MDC and permission was granted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017. This matter is now subject to further investigation including possible funding/loan arrangements.

4.4 Having experienced the fifth year the Parish Council had agreed to finance the extended Bus Service 288 connecting Maldon to West Heybridge for another year. This operation will be reviewed again for 2017 - 2018.

4.5 The Parish Council is aware of a need and requirement for allotments within the Parish and is actively looking for suitable land in the Parish. Allotments have also been set aside in the LDP for the North Heybridge Garden Suburb.

4.6 The Parish Council has nine notice boards throughout the Parish including two in Heybridge Basin, one at the Bentalls shopping complex , one in Holloway Road, one in Ten Acre Approach, one in Temple Way, two at Plantation Hall and one next

to the main entrance to the car park at Plantation Hall. Some of these are in need of updating and will be looked at in the 2017 – 2018 financial year.

In addition to displaying The Plantation Hall activities, the names of Parish Councillors, their contact details and Parish Council / Committee meeting dates, community activities are also displayed.

4.7 The Parish Council considers training to be an integral part of a successful and innovative council. Training assists Councillors reach their full potential, imparting knowledge; skills; competencies; best practice and legal guidance. Councillors are encouraged to attend training sessions where appropriate. The Parish Council also encourages staff training as part of their continuing professional development (CPD).

## **5. Parish Council in the Community**

5.1 The Parish Council will continue to seek to exert influence in relation to those things which affect Heybridge and Heybridge Basin and its residents. The Parish Council works closely with both the District and County Councils. The Parish Council, through its representatives, maintains regular contact with the District Council, Essex County Council, Highways, Local Health providers, Elms Farm Park Group, The Parish Passenger Transportation Group, Community Protection Officers and the Police.

5.2 The Community Protection Officers (CPO) carry out regular patrols at Plantation Hall, King George V Playing Fields and Daisy Meadows Car Park to help combat anti-social behaviour as well as issue fines for dog fouling and parking enforcement. Not only are the CPO acting as a deterrent but they have meaningful dialogue with the youngsters as well. The Parish Council wishes to thank the CPO for their important work during the year.

5.3 The Parish Council looks to support local organisations and community groups in their work. This past year it has contributed to the Maldon Cricket Club, Oars and Paws Fun Dog Show, Row for a Reason, the Darby and Joan Club, the PCC United Benefice of Heybridge, Heybridge Social Football Club and the Heybridge Residents Association.

The Parish Council has instigated a 'Charity of the Year' which is nominated at the Statutory Annual Council meeting. For 2016 – 2017 the Heybridge Primary School Parents, Teachers & Friends Association (PTFA) were nominated.

The Parish Council assisted the Heybridge Blackwater Rotary Club with their 2016 Christmas Sleigh runs with Councillors joining Rotarians raising money for good causes.

The Parish Council wishes to thank all those involved with organising and taking part in these Events.

5.4 The Remembrance Service last November was well supported by both the uniformed organisations and general public. The Parade started from Plantation Hall with a short service at the Memorial and refreshments were served afterwards at

Plantation Hall. The Heybridge Neighbourhood Group (HNG) supervised the refreshments and the Heybridge Blackwater Rotary Club (HBRC) supervised the road closure marshalling.

The Parish Council arranged for the War Memorial to be professionally cleaned and set up a program for regular cleaning.

The Parish Council wishes to thank both the HNG and the HBRC for their assistance as well as Rev. Canon Dr Michael Blyth for the excellent service.

5.5 The Parish Council has embarked on a programme for more interaction with the community which includes regular 'Meet your Councillor' days, CPR training, 'Clean up Days', Quiz Nights, a very successful Vintage Dance and of course our main event 'The Heybridge Community Festival'. In addition the Parish Council together with Essex County Council, has started a program of Family Learning events held throughout the year at Plantation Hall as well as a number of free talks on topics such as 'The Thames Sailing Barge Trust'.

This year's Community Festival was a great success with over 35 stalls Saint FM, various arena acts, Children's funfair, food and live music. The Parish Council wishes to thank all those involved in organising the Community Festival and all those who assisted us on the day.

The Parish Council had a 'Council Stall' at the annual Clarks Farm Greyhounds Show held on the King George V playing fields in September 2016.

5.6 The Parish Council will continue to publish the Heybridge Herald quarterly. This is part of raising the profile of Heybridge Parish Council as well as to inform the Community the details of their Parish Councillors, their contact details, what facilities are available to them and to notify the community of upcoming events. The Heybridge Herald can now be viewed on our website.

5.7 The Parish Council website is regularly updated and contains a wide range of information pertaining to the Council and its activities, including agendas, minutes, dates of meetings and Councillor contact details. The Council also has a 'Facebook page' to help promote its activities as well as to create a greater awareness of its work.

5.8 At the Parish Council meeting in August 2016 (Min 16/117) it was agreed that the issue of 'Town Status' would be discussed but only if more than 10 members were present. This is still to take place and hopefully now that the Parish Council has a full membership it will take place in the near future.

5.9 The continued support and work of the Parish Council's staff is valued and crucial to the Parish Council's work and achievements.

**Cllr. Michael Edwards**  
**April 2017**  
**Chairman**  
**Heybridge Parish Council**

## Year End Financial Report 2016-2017

Coding		Budget	Actual 31/03/2016	Debtors & Creditors	Total
<b><u>RECEIPTS</u></b>					
5001	Precept	168,000	168,000.00		168,000.00
6001	Lettings	33,000	41,779.65	604.00	42,383.65
6002	Letting Deposits		1750.50		1750.50
7001	Deposit Account Interest		858.50		858.50
	VAT income		540.75		540.75
8001	VAT Refunds		7206.44	2607.57	9814.01
9001	Other	1,000	1,219.39	616.15	1,835.54
9002	Grants		5,000		5,000.00
		<b>£202,000</b>	<b>£226,355.23</b>	<b>£3,827.72</b>	<b>£230,182.95</b>
<b><u>PAYMENTS</u></b>					
<b><u>PLANTATION HALL</u></b>					
2501	Equipment & Materials	1,500	1968.22	373.80	2,342.02
2201	Services (incl. Rates)	18,000	11,425.05		11,425.05
2401	Works and Maintenance	14,000	15,819.73	75.00	15,894.73
2301	Refunds of Deposits		2,065.50	100.00	2,165.50
		36,500	31,278.50	548.80	31,827.30
<b><u>OTHER EXPENSES</u></b>					
3001	Grass Cutting and Ground Maintenance	22,500	13,254.77	3,671.78	16,926.55
3101	Salaries & Pension Contributions	64,000	75,167.33		75,167.33
3201	Daisy Meadow Rates	6,000	5,808.00		5,808.00
3301	Ins/Subs/Misc	6,000	6,189.59		6,189.59
3401	Other Works - Repairs/Improvements	2,000	1,935.75	3,052.23	4,987.98
3501	Playground Equipment	3,000	1,053.74		1,053.74
3502	Playground Maintenance	2,000	291.75		291.75
3601	Street and Other Lighting	5,000	2,560.83	112.00	2,672.83
3701	Professional Fees - Planning/Support	5,000	715.15	2,622.00	3,337.15
3901	Elections	2,000	10,915.72	5,735.24	16,650.96
4201	Travel	750	562.54	35.31	597.85
4301	Events	2,500	453.75		453.75
4401	Specialist Equipment (Plantation Hall)	500	0		0
4501	Office Equipment	2,000	1,739.98		1,739.98
4601	General Office	4,000	4,580.16		4,580.16
4701	Chairman's Allowance	1,000	134.70	20.00	154.70
4702	Hospitality	1,000	980.00		980.00
4801	Training	3,500	3,065.32	282.05	3,347.37
4901	Support Services	8,500	4,910.00	1,600.00	6,510.00
1202	Promotional/Publicity	3,000	3,429.55		3,429.55
1210	MDC Park Rangers	6,500	7,708.85		7,708.85
		153,750	145,457.48	17,130.61	162,588.09
<b><u>PROJECTS / SECTION 137</u></b>					
3702	Neighbourhood Plan	20,000	2,369.71		2,369.71

1371	Donations	2,500	1,689.40	1,769.69	3,459.09
1375	Bus Service	7,200	6,440.00	1,536.00	7,976.00
		29,700	10,499.11	3,305.69	13,804.80
	<b>RUNNING COSTS SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>219,950</b>	<b>187,235.09</b>	<b>20,985.10</b>	<b>208,220.19</b>
	<b>VAT RECOVERABLE</b>		10,354.76		10,354.76
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
		<b>219,950</b>	<b>197,589.85</b>	<b>£20,985.10</b>	<b>218,574.95</b>
	<b>SURPLUS(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>-17,950</b>	<b>28,765.38</b>		<b>11,608.00</b>
	<b>ACCUMULATED FUNDS, B/F</b>	<b>140,390</b>	<b>138,942.63</b>		<b>138,942.63</b>
	<b>ACCUMULATED FUNDS, C/F</b>	<b>122,440</b>	<b>167,708.01</b>		<b>150,550.63</b>