

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

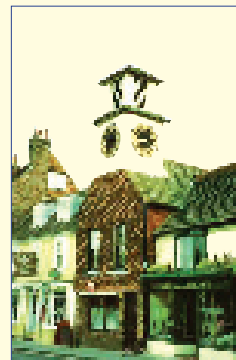
It has been a difficult time since Christmas on so many fronts. None more, than watching the appalling images of the natural disaster in Haiti unfold on our screen. Closer to home, it was the snow and ice in January that made our lives at times so difficult. It was great to see the children sledging and playing in the snow but for so many of our residents the snow and ice brought fear and isolation. I do know that many people called in on neighbours and shopped for them demonstrating the strong sense of community that exists in our town.

It was also great to see how busy our local shops were during this time and how important such amenities are so we must continue to support them. Your Councillors met on the first day of the snow and, with their limited powers, created a plan to alleviate some of the difficulties in walking and driving by ordering rock salt for key locations. Circumstances with supply ultimately prevented this from taking place which was frustrating on so many fronts. We are now working with both the County and District Councils to develop a longer term more robust plan for emergency weather situations and may well be seeking volunteers amongst you to help should we need to implement such measures. We will publish these plans as soon as possible. In the various reports from the Committee Chairmen, you will learn something of the Council's aspirations for the Town by way of their 'vision statements'. During the past few months we have spent time looking to the future and trying to determine what we would like to see by way of improvements and we shall revisit these plans as part of any new projects. What I believe is important is the process of taking time to look ahead and reflect on the good and what should be kept, as well as any changes for the better. Too often we focus only on day to day business (of which there is plenty).

One area for concern currently that we have is petty vandalism and misuse that seems to occur daily in the newly refurbished High Street toilets. The cost of replacing supplies either stolen or misused is well over budget. We have improved the monitoring of the area but are reluctant to introduce any sort of usage payment so we are asking for your help to report either to the wardens or the police any behaviour that you think may be suspicious. On a more positive note whilst writing this I am conscious we are but days away from the Parish Council's 'Showcase Event' an event for which we are all very excited and feel sure will be a great success.

Finally a date for your diaries, the Annual Parish meeting will be held on Monday 29th March at 7.30pm at the Steyning Centre. As part of this meeting we will be presenting certificates of appreciation to the Junior Wardens. We hope to see you all there!

Sue Rogers, Chairman



BLOOD DONORS

The next blood donors sessions to be held at The Steyning Centre, Fletcher's Croft will be on: Wednesday 21st April 2010 and 19th May, sessions are from 2.00 – 4.30 p.m. and 5.30 – 8.00 p.m.

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

The CAB is now operating its outreach service at The Steyning Centre once every 4 weeks. It is held on a Wednesday from 10am to 1pm. Please note that an appointment system operates and appointments can now only be made by phoning the CAB Helpline on 0844 477 1171.

DOG BINS

Dog faeces can now be placed in either your household rubbish bin or any normal litter bin. We do ask that you DOUBLE BAG/WRAP the package before disposing of it in this way!! You can, of course, continue to use the usual dog bins. Please report any overflowing dog bins to HDC on 01403 733144.

BECOME A COUNCILLOR MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Becoming a Councillor is one of the most rewarding roles in the community. The role of Councillor is one of representative, listener; decision-taker and team member. Councillors contribute to the work of the Council by:

Having a say about the things they care about

Putting forward ideas for as of the residents

Seeking the best outcome to local issues

Getting involved in decision making

If you think you could be interested in becoming a Councillor please come in and talk to me.

Sue Booth, Clerk to the Council 01903 812042

Email: spcclerk@btconnect.com

CIVIC AMENITY SERVICE

This service will be in the Fletchers Croft car park on: Saturday 20th March.

The Neighbourhood Wardens can be contacted on 07734 387888 (Paul) and 07734 387889 (Carol), 01903 813236 (Office). Please note they are not an emergency service and in an emergency always dial 999. PCSO Charlie Whittaker and the Police can also be contacted on the non-emergency number below. It is important to ring the Police on this number and report all incidents, even if they appear trivial, it is only in this way that a proper record of incidents, crime and anti-social behaviour can be maintained for the District.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT THE WARDENS ARE NOT THE POLICE, IF YOU ARE AWARE OR INVOLVED IN ANY INCIDENT FOR WHICH YOU WOULD NORMALLY CONTACT THE POLICE THEN PLEASE DO SO BY EITHER USING THE NON URGENT 0845 60 70 999 OR IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY 999

STEYNING CENTRE COMMITTEE

In 2006 the Steyning Centre Management Committee started to look at energy usage within the Centre and what steps they could take to reduce the carbon footprint by 10 – 15%.

The Committee is now very pleased to report that during the past four years the majority of the Centre's electric light bulbs have been changed for low energy bulbs, time switches have been adjusted and other actions taken which has resulted in a reduction to the electricity usage. Energy surveys have also been carried out and Solar Energy appeared to the Committee to be very suitable for generating electricity for part of the requirements of the Centre.

After many letters and phone calls, filling in copious forms and holding meetings with many people it was finally agreed to try and obtain funding to install Photovoltaic Cells onto the roof of the Centre. Grants were applied for and we are very pleased to announce have now been agreed to cover the total project cost from two providers, Viridor Credits and the Governments Low Building Programme.

The system is due to be installed during February 2010 and when complete will generate 1436 kWh per year of electricity for use within the Centre, an annual approximate saving of up to £500 and a saving of 761kg of CO2 footprint which reflects a 10 – 15 % reduction in the Centres current production.

The new hire rates for 2011/12 have now been agreed by committee representing a 3% increase.

The committee have also discussed and agreed their Vision Statement for the Steyning Centre which should reflect:-

Wish to retain

- Free car parking
- More room facilities
- More maintenance for the Centre

Wish list for the future

- Website
- Carbon neutral
- Increase/maximise bookings
- Extension of facility/centre

Gordon Marshall, Chairman Steyning Centre Management Committee

REPORT FROM PLAYING FIELDS COMMITTEE

The Committee is responsible for the care and monitoring of all the open spaces in Steyning. At this time there are two particular areas worthy of note. We have been very fortunate in obtaining a grant from the Playbuilder Scheme which will enable us to update the play facilities for children on the Memorial Playing Field. With this in mind we recently held a meeting with the School Council at St Andrew's Primary School. The young people examined some proposed layouts and looked at pictures of equipment available. They were very positive and made some good suggestions which we will take into account with our final plan. The idea is to combine the two areas into one and move it towards the centre of the field, buy some new equipment and renovate the existing equipment. We have requested tenders from several firms and at our next meeting in March we have asked two firms to show us designs for proposed layouts. From this the final design will be chosen. We hope the work will then be started in time for the summer.

Have you heard of Norman Way Open Space? This is a well kept secret and lies at the far end of shooting Field beside the bypass. It consists of a grass path leading to an area of hard standing with one basketball ring. We understand it is well used by young people in the area. We would like to be able to improve this area. If you have any suggestions you would like us to consider please contact the Parish Council office on 01903 812042 email: spcclerk@btconnect.com

The Playing Fields Committee has also been working on its Vision Statement

Wish to Retain

- To retain and promote the level of use of facilities on MPF
- To maintain the safety aspects of all outdoor facilities
- To maintain the accessibility of the MPF

Gill Ness-Collins, Chair of the Playing Fields Committee

Wish List For the Future

- Better maintenance of MPF and to try and keep dog faeces free
- To improve 'garden' type space on the MPF
- Improve Play facilities and keep them safe

MEETINGS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES: March 2nd*, April 6th*, May 4th*, June 8th*

PARISH COUNCIL: March 8th, May 10th, June 14th

HIGHWAYS & LIGHTING: April 20th, May 25th

PLAYING FIELDS: March 16th, April 27th, June 22nd*

STEYNING CENTRE: March 23rd*, May 18th*, June 29th

*Planning meetings will be held on these evenings at 7.00 p.m.

*Members of the public are welcome to attend all the above meetings which are held at The Steyning Centre. Meetings are at 7.30pm with the exception of Planning marked *. All meeting agendas are displayed on the Public Notice Board at the High Street car park. The Parish Council can be contacted at: The Steyning Centre, Fletcher's Croft, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3XZ. Tel: 01903 812042. Email: spcclerk@btconnect.com or steyningcentre@btconnect.com*

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE REPORT

Is Steyning a Town, a Village or a Parish?

The Parish Council is discussing whether it is now time to rename itself as a Town Council and would be interested to hear your views. This change of name is entirely at the discretion of the Council and has no other immediate consequences; in particular, it would not affect your Council Tax contribution. Our Clerk would become the Town Clerk but no other changes of name are currently envisaged. Some members feel that it would raise the both the visibility and status of a Council that already provides a wide variety of services to the residents of Steyning. **AS ALWAYS, THE COUNCIL WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU, IT'S YOUR TOWN, PLEASE LET US HAVE YOUR VIEWS.** If you have any questions about this suggestion, please contact the Clerk in the first instance. Tel: 01903 812042 or email: spcclerk@btconnect.com

Since 2000, the Parish Council has sought to honour local residents that have made a significant voluntary contribution to the life of Steyning with its annual Millennium Awards. After a pause of a year, this scheme is to be re-launched as the Millennium Community Awards and an Honours Board will shortly be installed in the Steyning Centre listing both past and future recipients of these awards. **Do please take a look when you visit.** Again, further details about the scheme can be obtained from the Clerk.

The work of the Junior Wardens from St Andrew's School is to be recognised at the forthcoming Annual Parish Meeting. Our own Neighbourhood Wardens (currently Paul and Carol) oversee this initiative which is greatly valued by the Council. **Do come along to the meeting on Monday 29 March and hear about their work for yourselves.** Steyning residents may be interested in commenting on the County Council proposals for the Minerals and Waste Development Framework. This concerns future sites for mineral extraction and for waste landfill throughout West Sussex. Full details are available on: www.westsussex.gov.uk/ccm/content/your-council/plans-policies-reports-and-initiatives/mwdf/background-papers.en?page=2.

THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING will be held on Monday March 29th at 7.30 p.m. at the Steyning Centre.

This year there will be a presentation by the Steyning Downland Scheme. Refreshments will be served and then there will be the opportunity for residents to hear the reports from the Parish Council Committees and ask questions of the Council. Everyone is welcome, please come along.

If you have a question for the Council and can come along please either write or email your question in advance to the Clerk at the Steyning Centre, 01903 812042, or email: spcclerk@btconnect.com

As, always, please forward any comments to the Clerk. **The top three priorities of the Finance & General Purposes for their Vision Statement were:**

- To set an Annual Precept that commands the full support of the residents of the Town.
- To give grants to organisations that provide tangible benefits to the residents of the Town.
- To achieve best value in all items of the Council's expenditure.

David Herson, Chairman Finance & General Purposes Committee

REPORT FROM HIGHWAYS AND LIGHTING

Weather, including rain, snow and ice are keeping the committee members very busy! Whilst the roads and pavements are the responsibility of WSCC we are working with them as much as we can to solve numerous issues around the town. These include the flooding problems on the Horsham Road, and Tanyard Lane and the footpath outside the Shooting Field site of the school. The snow and ice have created numerous pot holes which we are trying to arrange to get filled as quickly as possible.

As you may have read, whilst we decided not to pursue a 20mph zone through the Town, we have set up a sub committee to examine some of the locations which may benefit from some traffic calming measures and we will consider the numerous suggestions that you have made for our roads and where you would like to see a reduction in speeding vehicles.

In common with the other committees we too have been working on a vision statement. The roads and pavements of our town, and this includes our car parks, are not owned by the Parish Council and our influence over them is how we can work and lobby both Horsham District Council and WSCC to achieve our vision. The following represents just part of our full vision statement but serves to give you a brief insight of our aims.

HIGHWAYS & LIGHTING VISION STATEMENT

Influence the provision of free and adequate parking which is appropriate for the area that each car park serves, without spoiling the appearance of the surrounding area.

In conjunction with the Highways Authority and other parties, to ensure that the surface of all roads, path and pavements and steps throughout the Town are maintained to a high standard with both safety and comfort in mind. Create the appropriate means to maintain, check and monitor a clean environment and keep the Town tidy, free from litter and graffiti.

Sue Rogers

Chairman of Highways and Lighting

STREET LIGHTS

West Sussex County Council maintains all streetlights in Steyning. To report a fault dial 0845 7581622. It is useful if you have to hand the number of the light in question. Alternatively, the Parish Office will pass on your request, their number is 01903 812042

REPORT FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE

Horsham District Council have recently made the decision to cease sending hard copies of planning applications to the Parish Council. One result of this is that the public will not be able to visit the parish office to view plans in paper version, only on computer screen. Plans will be received by e-mail and projected onto a screen at the planning meeting. Members of the public will be free to take notes and make comments (at the appropriate time) on the plans. The plans can of course be viewed on the District Council's web site.

The number of planning applications has recently significantly reduced and some planning meetings have been cancelled. Meetings are now at 7pm on the first and third Tuesday of the month. They do not normally last longer than thirty minutes.

The significant building development in the town is the £4.5 m extension to the Grammar School boarding house and dining room. This development is proceeding well and is due to be completed in early 2011.

The South Downs National Park is now in existence. The Steyning Town is now outside of the park but some of the Parish is within it. The Park will be administered by a National Park Authority, consisting of 29 members, who are both local government and national government appointees. There will be six parish or town council representatives, two from each of West Sussex, East Sussex and Hampshire. Each Parish or Town Council had two votes and Councillors in West Sussex were given the opportunity to hear the candidates speak at the "hustings" in Arundel. I am pleased to say that one of our selected candidates was elected. Steyning will be a gateway town to the park and it is hoped that this will result in significant benefits, particularly for our town traders.

VISION STATEMENT FOR PLANNING

- To advise local authorities on the fabric of the Town and surrounding countryside with the objective of improving economic viability and resident/visitor convenience whilst maintaining the historic character of the Town.
- To influence the relevant authorities to identify suitable low cost housing in Steyning and to find suitable sites.
- Not to expand outside the existing settlement of the Town.
- Maximise development opportunities within the existing settlement of the Town.
- To consider open space/playing field development on the periphery of the Town.
- To restrict the height of current/new buildings.
- To encourage/retain commercial developments in the Town and a cross section of same.
- To try to retain indigenous trees within the Town.
- To retain/restore the historic facades and colour of the buildings in the Town.
- To encourage appropriate design conducive to a conservation area.

Paul Devlin – Chairman Planning Committee

STEYNING CHAMBER OF TRADE

The Chamber's annual Christmas events, despite appalling December weather, proceeded with the usual calm(!) and goodwill - and seemingly increased public support and perception at what S.C.T. provides for all of Steyning its residents, visitors and the surrounding communities.

At one stage, the spectacular street lighting and Christmas trees were under threat, but with members' efforts, the necessary extra funding for these lights was created. Special thanks go to Wendy at the Tea Rooms, Whites at White Horse Inn (including the auction evening), Sarah at Chez Joel Deli, and Lin at the Dolls House – each of these members made their own creative money raising ventures "for the lights". Thanks too, for the donations we received, not just in cash or cheques from the public at large, but also for your loose change popped into our little white bucket containers that many of our members had on their shop counters, etc.

The Christmas Late Night Shopping event went well enough, and the wind blowing down the High Street was less severe this year – or was it that we are just getting better at holding down stalls! Grateful thanks are given to all concerned, especially Sara Bowers at Steyning Bookshop, with strong particular support from Nick Hempleman, Sussex Produce. Once again, a sizeable voluntary work commitment was given all round by many, members and helpers – a grand evening was had by all.

Finally, do remember you can still purchase the hugely successful Steyning's "own" alternative cotton shopping bag, costing just £1 each – look for the signs in S.C.T. members' shops (e.g. Bunce's Hardware, Dolls House shop, Ian Ivatt, Tax Accountant, Post Office, Roberts the Butcher).

Ian Ivatt, Vice Chair.

ASHURST NEWS

Parish Council Meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 13th May 2010. Meetings start at 8pm at the Village Hall. Members of the public are welcome to attend all Parish Council meetings.

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting is to be held on 1st April 2010 at the Village Hall at 8.00pm. A representative from the Sussex Air Ambulance will be giving a short talk about their work. The Annual Parish Meeting is a chance to find out what is happening in your Village and to receive the annual report from the Parish Council. Please come along and meet your Parish Councillors and fellow residents. Refreshments will be served during the meeting.

Annual Precept

At the January meeting the precept for 2010/11 was set at £4,600.00 which includes £1,000.00 donation to the Village Hall Trust to go towards the building of the new Village Hall.

Parish Councillors

Alan Griffiths (Chairman)	01403 711544
Nick Hedley (Vice-Chairman)	01403 711036
Chris Jesse	01903 815089
Roy Powel	01403 710419
Jim Rucklidge	01903 815869
George Stevens	01403 710232
Linda Thornton	01403 713123
Clerk - Hazel Roxby	(Office hours 01903 812042) other times 01903 814802 Email: hroxby@hotmail.com

NEWS FROM BRAMBER PARISH COUNCIL

The Council is pleased to report that the notice board at Maudlin Lane/Maudlyn Close has now been refurbished and it is hoped that the items placed there will be easier to read now that new toughened glass has been fitted.

The new notice board for The Street has been ordered and should be erected in the near future. It will replace the existing board which has been leaking badly making articles difficult to read, and the new board has been designed to complement the area.

The Council are hopeful that a 20mph speed limit will soon apply to The Street since this is now on the priority list for West Sussex County Council. A few further checks are being made but this should be operational by the spring with remoulded humps and suitable warning signs at either end of the road.

During the recent cold weather and snow the Council have been able to acquire supplies of salt and these are available on request for any Bramber resident should adverse road conditions apply in the future. For further information please contact the Clerk, Mrs Anne Hyde on 01273-491902.

THE STEYNING & ASHURST CONSERVATION GROUP

Invite you to join them working in the local Countryside

Sundays: 17th January 2010, 21st February 2010, 21st March 2010, 18th April 2010

Meet at Fletchers Croft Car Park 9.30am next to The Steyning Centre
All ages and abilities are welcome. Ideal opportunity for students; including Duke of Edinburgh Award students

Please bring your own gloves. Further details from Marlene Carman on 01903 813938
email : marlenecarman@googlemail.com
Affiliated to the BTCV