

## Chairman's annual report.

I'd like to start my report with a warm embrace for the principle of partnership. Whilst a word known by most, it rings very true for this Parish. Partnership is a necessity if this Parish is to be sustainable into our future. As a rather sprawling rural community, we tend to lack critical mass in our services and our organisations; to that end, the sum of the Parish whole is definitely more powerful than its constituent parts. Partnership is key to our continued success. With that as backdrop, I want to touch on a few items in this report.

The Parish Council has limited funding and indeed authority; that said, there are opportunities and an ability for this Council to 'make a positive difference'. In this guise, the Parish Council has been keen to support those organisations that serve well those that live here. In the past year, over **£4200** has been issued to such organisations in the form of grants or awards. These have benefited charitable Parish organisations serving education, sport, recreation, church and care to name but a few. The Parish Council remains committed to support those who add the value into our community. Without them our Parish would be much diluted and these grants help recognise that contribution.

Another area where the Parish Council is active is in development matters. This is often a contentious subject where there is a balance between meeting the growth needs of our region whilst protecting the physical environment which so many of us cherish so much. Whilst the Parish Council is only a stakeholder rather than authority, the general tact we've taken is to oppose larger developments but support 'in-fill' options especially where they help link disparate parts of our community or bring infrastructure benefits which otherwise wouldn't be derived. An example of this is the Parsons Hill development which has now commenced; whilst not obvious to most, this development will bring added benefit of affordable housing, improvements to local pathways and supply over-flow parking too. The latter becoming even more important with traffic management restrictions being imposed on the Street outside of St George's Primary School.

Highways is another area where the Parish Council is a key stakeholder. In this vein, we have represented residents and been in active engagement with the A120/ Harwich Road roundabout scheme. This has been a very frustrating programme to all. It has seen much delay, multiple re-work and an impact to many local residents and businesses. After many, many months, we now see light at the end of a dark tunnel with civil works being completed by May with only final groundworks to follow on. Aside from that, Parish Council has also been involved in various road safety campaigns to curb speeding, assure safer parking and control the through transit of HGV.

Another area where the Parish Council can deliver local positive outcomes is through the maintenance and management of public spaces. Through our own part-time maintenance men (who provide an excellent and dependable service) much has been done in terms of maintenance of public, green space as well as minor repairs to public equipment. This has been complemented by very successful competitive contracts with local partners for larger commitments like hedge-line maintenance and Hare Green playing fields.

On another important front, GBPC has maintained links with local Policing and crime management matters. I think all appreciate that Policing services are becoming more intelligence led and more centralised for efficiency reasons. This can make contact more

distant but any material changes in criminal activity have been flagged where appropriate and forums of collaboration such as TDC Business Continuity & Resilience Events have been supported. Some promotion was also pursued earlier in the year to try and recruit a Special Constable for the Parish but to date no willing volunteers have come forward. Due consideration was also given to the funding of a Police Community Support Officer but the cost of that to a lone, rural Parish was prohibitive.

Last but not least, whilst direct services provided by the Parish Council has increased e.g. Parish maintenance, the cost to the taxpayer has been decreased by **0.4%**.

I thank all the Councillors who give up their time freely to contribute to the Parish and to all those within the Parish that do good for the benefit of our wider community.

Rob Lord – Chairman GBPC

### **Speedwatch**

2018 / 2019 saw the Speedwatch team drop at one point to 2 members but happily 6 volunteers have since stepped forward and been trained, taking the total now to 8. Also, after many years of trying, a third authorised location has been added not far from the Bromley Cross pub.

The Harwich Road remains the location where the vast majority of speeding motorists are detected.

The location outside the school very rarely sees offenders detected for a number of reasons, namely - the Speedwatch signs are clearly a deterrent as is the natural chicane of Hall Road, Brook Street and Parson's Hill. However, during the morning rush hour speeding is, perhaps ironically, kept to a minimum due to the insistence of some parents to park opposite the school. This poses a significant hazard to motorists and pedestrians alike and the Speedwatch Team has been approached on numerous occasions by motorists asking for something to be done about it.

The Speedwatch signs at the new location in Ardleigh Road are also clearly a deterrent as very few speeding motorists have been detected there.

As ever, the fewer motorists caught then the greater success a Speedwatch session is considered to be. Therefore, the small numbers being detected should be considered a positive outcome.

Neil Skinner – Speedwatch Coordinator

## **Great Bromley Tree Warden's Report 2018/19**

There has been no formal tree planting scheme in the village this year although the tree warden and others have been involved with both tree and hedge planting on private land around the village. It was pleasing to note that diligent watering by landowners during the hot dry summer last year enabled almost all of the trees planted in 2017/18 to survive. It was also gratifying to see that some of the roadside trees planted a decade or so ago are now over 8m high.

Great Bromley Parish Council arranged for various tree and hedge works to be undertaken around the Hare Green Recreation Field, some in response to requests by local residents. The works were undertaken by Bland Landscapes and have improved the area significantly.

In October 2018, Tendring District Council confirmed that tree preservation orders had been made on the roadside trees on the northern side of the Harwich Road, between the Courthouse Inn and Hare Green. This was in response to a planning application being submitted for development on adjacent land.

Following a site visit by TDC officials, protected status was removed from two trees bounding the new housing development at the bottom of Parsons Hill. It has since been confirmed that these trees were dying and they have now been felled. Various other protected trees in the village have been pruned, in each case after the appropriate permissions had been granted.

Col. M Frostick – Tree warden

## **The Bromley Messenger 2019 Report**

The 2018/19 year proved rather difficult for the Messenger. A number of our advertisers decided to terminate advertising in the magazine and our printers had to raise their charges, due to increased costs. However, since the start of the new-year we have attracted a number of new adverts and the magazine continues on a sound financial base. We have also discussed and investigated the possibility of printing the Messenger in colour and hope to progress this in the coming year.

Richard Perry (Hon Treasurer )