



*Ramsden Bellhouse  
Parish Council  
Annual Report  
2006-2007*



## Report from the Chairman Len Ferris

2006 has been another busy year for the Parish Council with its limited resources and an agenda dictated to some extent by the carry over of two of the previous year's tasks. The two tasks were the employment of a Community Police Support Officer (CPSO) and the traffic calming in Church Road. In addition to these two items we have been able to continue with the Taxi Voucher scheme for elderly residents without their own transport. This scheme whilst only affecting a small number of people has been greatly appreciated and helped to satisfy a definite need. We intend to continue with this scheme while there is an identifiable need for at least a further year.

The monitoring of planning decisions continues to take much of our time although the frustration of the ongoing conflict with Basildon District Council's Planning Department detracts from the satisfaction of the task. The District Council's new long term plan for the area was abandoned following objections but they do not appear to be prepared to honour the previous special conditions appertaining to Ramsden Bellhouse which we consider should be adhered to. The result is one of confusion which is exploited by developers for their own gain. We will continue to voice our opinion on those decisions with which we disagree and to press for more democratic and meaningful consultation on planning matters.

We were able to reduce the Parish Council element of the Council Tax for the coming year mainly by the non implementation of ongoing funding for a Community Police Support Officer. We have however kept in reserve the initial year's funding should the new improved policing policy adopted by the County not come up to expectations. Our original proposal was put on hold while we investigated a private security contract because the Police Authority were not willing to allow us any degree of control over what

we would have been funding. However they decided instead to provide a CPSO from their own funding for cover of the Crouch Ward. This officer is now being reinforced by a second officer and an occasional beat officer. These officers have all been in evidence in recent months. If this level of cover continues we should be able to release the reserved funding in the next financial year.

The main talking point this past year has of course been the traffic calming of Church Road. Our original proposal which would have been funded mainly by ourselves was a limited scheme which the County Highways Authority considered would not achieve the required result. They in turn submitted their own scheme consisting of six chicanes. This scheme was subsequently approved and so far five of the six chicanes have been installed with a resulting substantial improvement in the calming of the traffic. A few complaints have been voiced about the scheme but in my experience these have usually come from drivers whose driving was in need of calming. The Highways Authority carried out extensive consultation about their proposals and wherever possible has made every effort to accommodate any objections. I have been associated with many so called consultation exercises in my work and I would like to compliment the Authority on the way they conducted and implemented the exercise. One of the drawbacks of making adjustments to the original scheme is that in some respects its effectiveness has been slightly reduced. In saying this I have in mind the abandonment of alternative priorities for the chicanes although I must admit that this has had less adverse effect than might have been anticipated.

The one chicane that has so far not been installed is the one proposed outside the Fox and hounds. Although not an ideal location it is a critical one for the northern approach to the village and the Authority has not yet been able to amicably resolve the objection of a local resident to the installation and the matter is still under discussion.

Dealing now with a personal matter and the year ahead I have been chairman of our Parish Council for over five years during which time I have seen a number of improvements to our village sponsored by the small band of dedicated councillors ably supported by our very able Parish Clerk to whom I would like to express my thanks. However I consider the time is now right to hand over the chair to a younger councillor and this I am pleased to do for this coming final year of this Council's term. I will of course continue to be an active member of the Parish Council.

Len Ferris

**SUMMARY RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31/3/07**

31/03/2006		31/03/2007
£	RECEIPTS	£
9298.80	Precept	16284.60
74.34	Interest Deposit Account	123.32
913.83	VAT Refund	70.00
1000.00	ECC Grant	
11286.97	Total receipts	16477.92
	PAYMENTS	
351.12	Administration	252.32
3060.91	Staff	2925.40
147.50	Training	80.00
453.46	Audit/Insurance/Elections	464.17
312.07	Subscriptions	322.67
	Taxi Vouchers	935.00
	Noticeboard refurbishment	101.00
4980.00	Play area fence	
940.00	Projects/Memorial/Churchyard	1080.00
50.00	S137	55.00
891.63	VAT	44.62
11186.69	Total Payments	6260.18
	SUMMARY	
10562.72	Balance at 1/4/06	10663.00
11286.97	ADD Total Receipts	16477.92
11186.69	LESS Total Payments	6260.18
10663.00	Balance Carried Forward 31/3/07	20880.74

These cumulative funds are represented by:

Current Account balance	7307.71
Deposit Account balance	13573.03
Total fund	20880.74

<b>YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS</b>					
	<b>Pam Cummins</b>	<b>Len Ferris</b>	<b>Alan Harvey</b>	<b>Richard Bayliss</b>	<b>Ernie Skinner</b>
Contact details	Firs Cottage, Ramsden Park Road	Malbo, Homestead Road	Brook House, Church Road	Sonesta, Church Road	St. Anthony, Ramsden Park Road
Posts held	<b>Vice Chairman</b> , Taxi Voucher co-ordination, Open Spaces & Environment	<b>Chairman</b> , Member internal auditor, Notices	Traffic Calming		Taxi Voucher co-ordination, Open Spaces & Environment, Notices deputy
Representatives to:			Basildon Association of Town & Parish Councils,	Village Hall, Police Liaison	ECC Public Transport Liaison
Meeting attendance	<b>7/7</b>	<b>6/7</b>	<b>5/7</b>	<b>4/7</b>	<b>7/7</b>
Training Attended	Village Planning			Planning-Development Control	

<b>NON-ELECTED APPOINTMENTS</b>		
<b>Clerk to the Council</b>	<b>Independent Internal Auditor</b>	<b>External Auditor</b>
Mrs. Karen Plumridge, 2 Clinton Close, East Hanningfield, Chelmsford CM3 8AZ ☎ 01245 400628 ✉ <a href="mailto:karen.plumridge@btinternet.com">karen.plumridge@btinternet.com</a>	Heelis and Lodge	Lubbock Fine, Russell Bedford House, City Forum, 250 City Road, London EC1V 2QQ

## Parish Council Website



The website gives residents access to the archive of Minutes of Parish Council Meetings and other documents such as budgets and accounts as well as the latest Meeting Agenda.



There is also information about Parish Council activities and news.



'Hits' during the year varied between a quiet 391 in August and 1002 in October.