



Doddinghurst Parish Council



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Parish Office (adj. Village Hall)

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Parish Council Newsletter

The Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to assure all residents that it will still continue to work hard to protect village amenities and keep Doddinghurst a pleasant place to live in 2011.

Update – Anit-social behaviour in Doddinghurst

The Police and the Parish Council are still struggling to stem a wave of anti-social behaviour which has blighted the Village for some time now. The police, led by Sergeant Ben Felton have done an admirable job in providing the resources for additional evening and weekend patrols, however they cannot be in attendance 24 hours a day, so the village has still been subject to incidents of vandalism. The saddest being the Christmas Eve carols around the bonfire event which was “hi-jacked” by youths. When the Carollers had left for the night the bonfire was re-

ignited to burn part of the village hall garden fencing, which was subsequently used to set light to trees on the playing fields.

Graffiti was also daubed on the lower walls of the Village Hall building and users of the Parish meeting room have been subjected to childish harassment.

Brentwood Borough Council have offered an infra red equipped CCTV system to record activity in the areas affected and the Parish Council have accepted the proposals.

As stated in our last newsletter a minimum of repair and replacement will take place until these incidents stop and the perpetrators caught so we want to reassure villagers that both the Parish Council and Essex Police are determined to make this happen.

The Big Society,
Localism and what it will
mean for you

The government is aiming to push decision making closer to home, your home. Parish Councils are the most local form of government and we are being asked to say if we want to be involved in deciding how the village will develop by establishing a "Neighbourhood Plan" and if we want to run some or all of the local council services that are currently provided by Brentwood Borough Council.

Neighbourhood Plans are wholly new so have no precedent and Doddinghurst Parish Council has expressed an interest in being the vanguard project that will establish a format for the future and is being supported by government grant. The intent is that these plans become associated with the Brentwood Borough Local Plan and form an important reference document in dealing with planning development applications for the Village. The Neighbourhood Plan isn't necessarily curtailed by the Parish Council boundary and isn't just about building work but also about the social and economic health of the community.

The devolution of services and the extent this can happen will be

dependent upon suitable funding arrangements. The Parish Council already carries out maintenance work on the recreation land it owns and receives a discretionary grant from Brentwood that covers the cost of the work. However, the grant is being cut and there is a risk of "Double Taxation". This arises when services included in Council Tax, collected by Brentwood Borough Council, is also charged to the residents of a Parish in the Parish Precept charge, so Villagers end up paying twice for the same service. The Parish Council is working with Brentwood to determine how this can be avoided if the Parish Council takes on the responsibility for delivery of services currently carried out by Brentwood.

The services being discussed, at present, are about road and pavement sweeping, cleaning of street furniture such as road nameplates, emptying drain gullies and verge mowing. More specialist work such as refuse and recycling collections and work under the umbrella of Essex County Council, including highways repairs are unlikely to be affected.

For more on this topic and regular updates visit www.doddinghurst-pc.gov.uk and follow the links for "localism".

Peartree Playing Field

By the time you read this the replacement of the driveway at the entrance to Peartree Playing field should have been completed. This is much needed as the previous surface had become very uneven and covered in weeds. May we take this opportunity to remind villagers that this area is not a parking place and thoughtless drivers are mainly responsible for the unsightly state of the verges by the field entrance.

Activity Day

The Parish Council is in the process of organising an event which will take place during the Easter school holiday on 15th April from 1pm to 4pm. It is aimed at the 11 to 16 year age group of the Village and there will be various activities to participate in including a climbing wall, and archery. A minimum of 30 people are needed to attend and places will cost £6 and be allocated on a first come first served basis. To register your interest please contact the Parish Office on 01277 824245.

Church Lane "Car Park"

This is yet another plea to parents not to park on the yellow lines outside either of the schools, by the zebra crossing, or in the lay-by in front of the infant school. The journey to and from school for those on foot is becoming more and more hazardous as many parents behave as if it is their right to stop and disembark their children wherever they choose. This is often the place most inconvenient to the families attempting to cross Church Lane without the benefit of x-ray vision to see through a long line of double parked cars as to whether there are any oncoming cars approaching.

Oak Decline Disease

Recent media reports have made much of the fact that this disease is a serious threat to the oak trees of Britain. Doddinghurst Parish Council do own and manage areas of woodland containing oak trees so we want to reassure residents that we will be closely monitoring the situation.

2011 Parish Council Meetings

The forthcoming meetings for 2011 will be held on February 3rd, March 3rd, April 7th, May 5th, June 2nd, July 7th, September 1st, Oct 6th, November 3rd, December 1st. Meetings take place in the Parish Room, adj. Village Hall and start at 8.00pm. All villagers are most welcome to attend. We are hoping that the "Big Society" initiative will encourage people to start coming along to meetings and finding out how they can make a difference to the area they live in.

For further information on any of the items in this newsletter please note our office opening times are Tues, Weds and Thurs mornings 9.30 – 12.30. An answerphone service is available outside these hours.

Parish Council Office

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For more information about the Council and the Village.

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