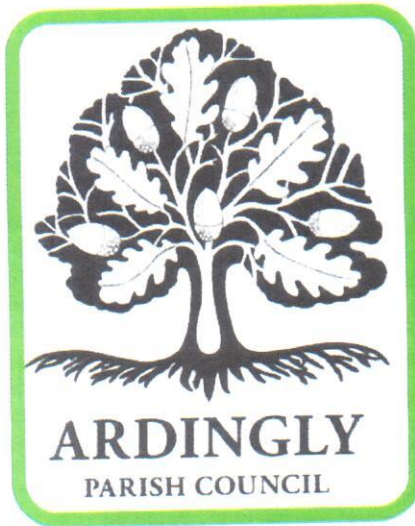


ANNUAL REPORT 2014/2015



Chairman's Report

2014 / 15 has been a year of progress on many fronts. Our Neighbourhood Plan is nearing completion, planning permission was granted on Standgrove Field, the first large development in the village for some years and we have started work on building allotments, thanks to the help of Ardingly College.

Village societies always go in waves, but right now there is a growing sense of community in the village. We now have a monthly cinema, the village fete attracted many visitors and the Christmas fayre in Hapstead Hall was once again a throng of people. We are very lucky to have a core group of people that help put on these and many other great events. Personally I enjoy these occasions as they are a great opportunity to see friends and new acquaintances. Please do support these community assets as we are so much lesser without them.

I want to take this opportunity, on behalf of the whole parish, to thank the councillors that put in so much hard work in the parish. You make such a difference!

The only slight concern is the fact that The Oak has remained tenantless for so many months. Anyone fancy running a pub?

Will Meldrum, Chair of Parish Council

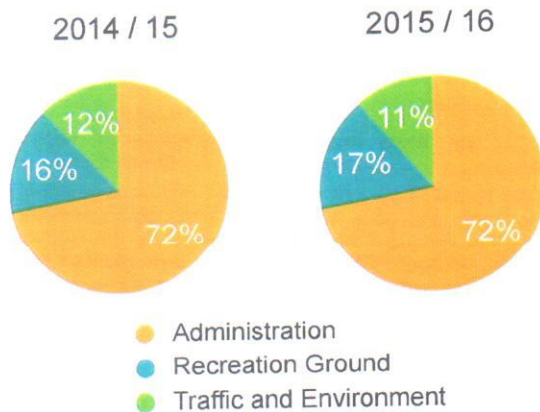
Finance Report

The Parish Council is mindful that although costs are generally increasing, real wages are not keeping pace. So, following discussions with all the heads of committees, it was agreed that we would aim to keep our budget the same in 2015 / 2016 as in 2014 / 2015.

Therefore, as a result of careful planning, the budget for the upcoming year will stay at £77,933.

I would like to thank Rachel for her sterling work and that of my fellow Parish Councillors.

George Ruse, Committee Chair



Emergency Planning Committee

The Emergency Planning Committee plans for wider emergencies in the village and submits a winter plan to MSDC every year that outlines our approach to severe weather. As in previous years, we have appointed a local contractor to clear snow and grit the roads should the need arise. One of our members, Mrs Rocks, also arranged for the village to receive a hand operated salt spreader from the local authority which has already been put to good use by Mr Killian.

The Committee is currently in the process of updating and completing the village emergency plan and will be requesting details from parishioners about services they could provide in an emergency. We will continue to do this every year to ensure the document is not only accurate but also 'live' with easy access for all.

Rowena Chalk, Committee Chair

Planning Committee Report

As a body of Councillors, our role is to review new planning applications within our Parish. To inform its deliberations, the Committee often carries out site visits to the property involved, depending on the type of application. All site visits are attended by as many committee members as possible in order to ensure objectivity. Once planning applications are discussed, we put forward recommendations to Mid Sussex District Council. The Parish Council is a statutory consultee in the process and is not able to make final decisions.

If the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan comes into being as a legal document following the Referendum taking place March 5th, it will give the Parish Council and the community more influence than we have at present on planning matters in the village.

Planning Committee meetings are open to the public and are usually held prior to the Parish Council meeting every month.

Mick Brixey, Committee Chair

Neighbourhood Plan Committee Report

2014 saw good progress with our Neighbourhood Plan even if it was slower than we had anticipated. The Plan was first approved by Mid Sussex – a process that took some time as our Parish lies within the Ashdown Forest protection zone, and there were sensitivities around our approach. Following this, the first plan was reviewed by an external examiner, who also approved the plan.

So we are now in the final straight. On March 5th – in just a few days – the plan will go to referendum in the parish. All those that have worked on the plan urge all those that live in the parish to vote. I know there's a real temptation to just stay at home, but the plan will really help us protect our village and parish from unwanted development. It gives us a very strong voice in how development happens and how resources are spent. So please do vote!

Although we cannot report any hard facts, we know Ardingly College are in discussions with a developer with a view to selling the land at Standgrove. If they conclude a deal, we believe this will be very positive for the village. Watch this space!

Will Meldrum, Committee Chair



Recreation and Open Spaces Committee

I took on the role of Chairman in the autumn of 2014 and as a committee we look to maintain and improve the leisure facilities and open spaces within the parish that are the responsibility of the Parish Council. We are assisted by Pat Killian who helps to keep the Recreation Ground free from rubbish, sweeps the pavements and salts them in winter.

The tennis courts have recently been cleaned and treated and are ready for the forthcoming season. Should you be interested in joining the tennis club and using these facilities, then please contact Roy Simmonds on 01444 892 064.

Unfortunately, the moles have arrived again this year following problems last year which affected both the football pitch and the cricket green; a molecatcher has been contracted so the problem should be eradicated soon. The children's play areas and equipment have been cleaned as the lichen had started to take over and had become very slippery.

The Committee continues to look at the possibility of carrying out a major refurbishment project to the Pavilion and we are in the process of working through plans and costing. We are also researching the funding opportunities that might be available for this project. Should you have any ideas of how we can use the building further, then do let us know.



The Pavilion is at present used for the Ardingly cricket and football clubs. Both of these love to have supporters to cheer them on, so why not go along and watch.

Derek Stutchbury, Committee Chair

Youth Provision Committee

The Youth club ran very successfully for the first six months of 2014. The Committee was able to secure funding from The London Community Foundation in partnership with Affinity Sutton Housing Group, which allowed us to employ Peter Barnes from

Sussex Clubs for Young People and a junior youth worker. Up to ten young people attended the Club to play pool, table tennis and seek advice on topics such as job applications and handling money. The club also provided a venue for young people to come and meet on a social basis.

Two summer sessions were held in August in partnership with Streetmate involving circus skills and drumming. Funding for this project was provided by Mid Sussex District Council Better Young Lives Activity Fund and The London Community Foundation in partnership with Affinity Sutton. Attendance was limited, but we will be striving to do it again and involve more children.

Following discussions with the service provider, youth worker and the Committee it was agreed the Youth Club would no longer run after the summer months. However, we are constantly reviewing the situation and as Chair I would be happy to hear the views of the parishioners on this matter.

The Committee is working on holding some events for young people in 2015 and has some new and interesting ideas! If anyone has an involvement with an organisation involving young people and would like to join the Committee, we would welcome new members.

Fiona Rocks, Committee Chair

Traffic Committee Report

The work on our traffic calming proposals moved slowly in 2014 however we have had progress in the past few weeks. West Sussex has reviewed our proposals and although are supportive in principle, we need to do more work on the specific calming designs in order to make sure they suit all residents and are safe. It is a long process.

Separately we have made some progress in setting up a Neighbourhood Speedwatch group who will use speed cameras to check the speed of cars in the village. Although the Speedwatch team will not be able to impose fines upon speeding cars, offenders are recorded and are contacted by the police to note their misdemeanour. Multiple offenders can apparently be fined. We have some volunteers but can always do with more; so if you're interested in helping out, please contact our Clerk.

Will Meldrum, Committee Chair

HAPSTEAD HALL – ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

Hapstead Hall is managed by a Committee of volunteers made up of representatives from Village clubs and organisations together with members of the Parish Council. The Hall Charity was set up so that Hapstead Hall could be used by any activity within the village to help foster a sense of community in Ardingly.

There are several organisations in the village that have used the Hall and Reading Room for a number of years. One new venture that commenced in 2014 is the Cinema Club set up and run by Sarah Chapman and Fiona Rocks with a small group of helpers. The monthly event has been very successful and is extremely popular and we hope that it will continue to thrive with support from the community.

As with everything today our overheads are increasing, so we need to let the Hall out commercially to help cover our costs. This year we will be increasing the promotion of Hapstead Hall as a venue as we feel it offers great value with excellent, clean facilities.

Jane Simmonds our Clerk and Nick Moorey the Chairman both stood down this year and on behalf of the Management Committee I would like to thank them for all the work they put in. We are pleased to welcome Sonia Watson as our new Clerk and as a Committee we look forward to working with her.

Lastly I would like to thank Brian and Kim who keep the halls operating and of course the stalwarts on the committee who give so much of their own time for the village.

Mick Brixey, Committee Chair

