

Chairman's Annual Report

As Chairman of the Stambridge Parish Council, I welcome the Residents and Councillors to the Annual Stambridge Parish Council Assembly.

The past year has been a challenging one for the Parish Council, restructuring the processes within each committee, defining a clear relationship with the Stambridge Memorial Hall & Grounds, resolving old issues and the development of a community builders model.

Gratitude goes to our Clerk. Mrs Lisa Marie Fox and all appointed councillors for their tireless efforts in transforming and rectifying the processes of the Stambridge Parish Council, forming a stronger partnership with Rochford District and Essex County, and bringing fresh ideas and direction to the Parish Council.

The Parish Council has developed and continues to enhance a Community Building model in supporting communities at grass roots level. A Stambridge community forum has been formed by the amenities of Stambridge and was launched in September 2013. Monthly meetings are conducted at the Stambridge Primary School Hall where all residents are invited.

During the financial period of 2013-14, Stambridge Parish Council acquired the subsequent grants to contribute in the growth of a sustainable community.

1. Community Initiative Fund (CIF)-£20,000 towards the restoration of the Stambridge Memorial Hall.
2. Community Safety Partnership (CSP) - £900 for the Community initiative.
3. People & Policy Unit - £1,500 for tables & chairs.

The Stambridge Community Forum is forging ahead in ensuring their mission statement is adhered to.

“To bring together all those who serve or live in the community so that, where practicable, their knowledge, experience and other assets can be shared for the community's mutual benefit.”

The Parish Council utilised the CSP grant to stage for the first time in its history the COPE event. The venue was full of different stalls all aimed at the older generation with specialised presentations from Essex Police advising on home security, the Fire Service talking about carbon monoxide poisoning, Trading Standards giving tips on how to deter doorstep sellers and even included some armchair exercises to get pulses racing. The event was a success and will be held annually at the Stambridge Memorial Hall.

During the worst rainy period in history, the residents of Stambridge showed their commitment in ensuring our flooding was kept at bay near Stambridge Memorial Hall. The residents, dog walkers at short notice showed unity in filling sandbags to keep back the localise flooding.

The Stambridge Parish Council provided **Salt Bins** at the **Royal Oak, Stambridge Church, The Cherry Tree** and **Cagefield Road** and will remain at these locations for the foreseeable

future to cater for any cold spills.

For the residents safety, the Parish council is trying to keep the lights on at night where many other parts of Essex are having theirs turned off between midnight and 5am.

Stambridge Community Forum is working in partnership with the police to reintroduce the Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) into Stambridge, which will be an important part of the local community and of vital assistance to Neighbourhood Policing. Residents are the eyes and the ears of the police and NHW provides a two way avenue of communication.

In November 2013, what a great afternoon it was, watching a train of 60 pupils from Stambridge Primary School, parents, teachers and Head Teacher walking down Stambridge Road to the Rankin Cricket Ground to plant approx. 200 trees. This was education at its best!!!

The Sewage Treatment works have, overall been fairly quiet this year. A review of the site is scheduled for June 2014. In previous years there have been some issues with the works, mainly concerning odours and traffic movements; however, we will continue to monitor the situation to ensure the status quo.

The allotments are now self-funding and the amount of vandalism has decreased compared to previous years, which was due to the installation of the security Iron Gate and the vigilance of our plot holders. As part of the community building initiative the Parish decided to allocate a portion of the grant bid in offering Stambridge Primary School plot-1, which was accepted by the Head of the school.

In planning, the Police in partnership with Stambridge Parish Council and Rochford District have contacted the developers regarding the safety and demolition of the Mill. Security fencing has been installed around the Mill and we urge dog walkers not to access this area. A date for the demolition of the Mill has yet to be decided

As everyone is aware the air traffic at Southend Airport has increased where passenger numbers up to March 2013 were 700,000 and EasyJet are commencing new routes from Southend. Several public meetings were organized to discuss and advise the public of their rights of claim – Claim under part 1 of the land compensation act 1973 (as amended) London Southend Airport runway.

The decision has been made to suspend the closure of the Canewdon, Rochford and Sorting Offices until further notice. The Parish Council will provide updates when available.

The Parish Council received written petitions from residents and non-residents regarding the increase in traffic and speeding on Little Stambridge Hall Lane. This was escalated to the ECC Highways and they have installed “Slow” markings.

Since speeding continues to be a problem on Stambridge Road, the Stambridge Community Forum in partnership with the Police Service conducted a Speed Gun Training course in Stambridge on the 10th April 2014, where local residents are now qualified to operate the Speed Gun in a speed awareness program. Thank you to **PC Michele Rawson** for arranging the training course and further training courses will be provided in the near future.

“**Cllr Jo McPherson**, who participated in the training, would like to thank Stambridge parish Council for their huge involvement in promoting Community Speedwatch and providing the venue. Jo says , it is good to see the parish council supporting such initiatives as community speedwatch'. Speedwatch will be now out on the streets of Stambridge sending a clear message to speeding drivers.” The Parish Council will continue to press for traffic calming measures.

In 2013, with the assistance from the RCCE (Rural Community Council of Essex) the Stambridge Memorial Hall charity constitution was altered to clarify the charities role and responsibilities and resubmitted to the charity commission. In addition, the Stambridge Parish Council is now the Sole Trustees of the Stambridge Memorial Hall.

After years of neglect and various acts of vandalism, the Stambridge Parish Council and the Stambridge Memorial Hall committee have been determined to see it function again as a Village Hall. Various private functions have been held there and we very much hope bookings will continue to increase resulting in the hall, not only being self-funding, but also enabling us to make further improvements and additions to facilities at the Stambridge Memorial Hall.

During the year 2014 the Parish Council vision is to;

1. Enhancing the Stambridge Community Forum.
2. Supporting Disability Sports programs.
3. Introduction of Neighbourhood Watch Program into Stambridge.
4. The Restoration of the Stambridge Memorial Hall and Grounds.
5. Continuation of supporting the COPE in Stambridge.
6. Conducting further speed awareness programs.
7. The circulation of a community survey.
8. The implementation of numerous projects dependant on a grant approval to work closely with the two nursing homes, the local school, the community, the church, youth, disability sports and sports in general.
9. Co-Ordinating the Crucial Crew with the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) & Rochford Hundred secretary.

The Parish Council is aware of the challenges ahead, we not only need to fill any vacancies, but that we also need to utilise members strengths and interact with the community of Stambridge to be an efficient and successful parish council who can control their direction and objectives and stand steadfast with the other Parish Councils in the District. I personally want to thank the councillors who supported me in turning this Parish in one that supports the community, which was no mean feat. Special thanks go to our new Clerk Mrs Lisa Marie Fox for her reorganisation of Parish material both electronically and manually and for developing processes to support our Parish.

By Cllr George Ioannou Dated 12th May 2014
