

## **Great Burstead and South Green Village Council – Chair's Annual Report 2014/2015**

This has been another productive year for Great Burstead and South Green Village Council. Prudent management of our finances has meant the precept, the local taxation paid annually to the Village Council, has fallen for the fourth year running. This year the precept is £11.43 on a band D property which will be slightly higher or lower on other bands.

We are consulted by Basildon Borough Council on village planning applications and we continue to respond to these applications. Having investigated the possibility of creating a Neighbourhood Plan and being informed the Borough Council's Local Plan will not be finalised until 2018 action on our Neighbourhood Plan has been deferred until 2016.

Several projects are being evaluated. Replacing the benches on the Green is a project created to commemorate the work of Len Turner in the community. A project to improve the play area at Langham Hall Park has been proposed by Councillor Cottle where he has also volunteered to help with maintenance.

We are fortunate that Cllr Kay Twitchen, Essex County Councillor for Burstead Ward, often attends our meetings and acts on concerns we raise and those raised by residents. The Village Council works on residents behalf for example, due to residents' concerns regarding noise and disturbance we encouraged Basildon Borough Council to hold a public consultation on the recycling point at South Green.

Community events are organised by the Village Council. Councillor David Knight, Chair of the Litter Working Party, covering Christmas lights, litter picks and the Fun Day has guided the Litter Picks which have gone from strength to strength especially as we now have our own equipment. He suggested the annual Christmas lights switch on event which took place again in 2014 when 200 people attended. However, the lamp columns Christmas lights motifs had to be taken down a few days after the event due to Essex County Council's stringent lamp column policy, and we are currently seeking a resolution to this issue. Our first Fun Day on the green was held last year which for a first time out was a success. As the Fun Day is a growing event Councillor Linda Willingham has taken on the Chair of a separate Fun Day Event Working Party and she has put a considerable amount of effort into making it a Fun Day for all the Family. Don't miss out come along on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August 1-4pm. As the green is used by dog walkers it was decided to include a dog show in the event. Its only £2 to enter the dog show, so if you have a dog bring them along, they may win a prize.

Again we have organised planting at the bell bollards, weeding at the shops area and erection of the hanging baskets. The baskets will be up later this year as Essex County Council has required the nurseries who have been erecting the baskets for 10 years to take a training course.

We continue to communicate with residents through our meetings at which the public and press are always welcomed. Our newsletter, the Village Voice, is edited by Councillor John Dear and is delivered by Great Burstead's St Mary Magdalene Church for which we are very grateful. Our website and two notice boards are regularly updated.

The work of the Village Council is carried out by Village Councillors who are unpaid volunteers. They give of their time freely and deserve our thanks.

Lastly, we thank the Village Clerk who works to support the Village Council in putting into action its decisions and ensuring that finances are effectively managed to benefit residents.

**Chair - Marie Dear**