

SHERE PARISH COUNCIL

Serving the villages of Gomshall, Holmbury St Mary, Peaslake, Shere
and a large part of Abinger Hammer



ANNUAL REPORT 2015/2016

Chairman's Report

Your Parish Council continues to work on your behalf to make the Parish a more pleasant place in which to live and work. This Annual Report not only tells you what your Parish Council has done in the past year, but also confirms two important outstanding projects that the Council hopes to progress in the current year. Information on the role, structure and contact details of the Council appears at the end of the report.

New Councillors - The General Election of 7th May 2015 was not the only event of that day. There were Parish Council elections held for each ward at the same time. Both the North Ward (Shere and Gomshall) and South East Ward (Holmbury and part of Abinger) returned their sitting Councillors but for the South West ward (Peaslake) there was a major change.

So at the first Council meeting of the 2015/16 Council Year thanks, and farewells, were expressed for the proven contribution that John Tenner, Marion Taylor – Cotter , Michael Urban and Jim Collin had made on behalf of Peaslake as a Village, and the Parish as a whole, over a number of years.

A warm welcome was then extended to Paul Carter, Adrienne Golightly, Gerry Reffo and Beverly Harrap on being the newly elected team for Peaslake.

Peaslake Farm Developments - towards the end of the preceding Council Year, a Peaslake Farm Working group had been established to look at and evaluate the 16 possible options that had been identified by the Council for the use of the farm – the farmyard and the fields– following the decision of the tenant of the last 20 years not to renew his lease. The new Peaslake Councillors – two of whom had already previously been nominated by the Peaslake Protection Group to represent the views of the Village on this working group - were thus all very quickly involved in what has

probably been the Council's most demanding and significant initiative for some years. The work and debates – research, discussions and development of proposals – over the ensuing 12 meetings culminated towards the final quarter of the Council Year with an extensive Parish wide consultation process on what the community felt to be the best use of this community asset.



It is good for the cohesiveness of the Parish that the views in each ward as to what would be most beneficial for the community were clear, **and the same - a development that provides some much needed affordable housing, for locals to rent.**

In the Parish as a whole, 73% felt a use that provided subsidised rented housing, would provide the greatest benefit to the Parish. Whilst 27% felt a rural business park, without any housing provision, would be the best option for the Parish. For full details of the consultation please see the Parish Council website;

www.shereparishcouncil.gov.uk/peaslake-farm/

The Parish Council will hold a Special Council Meeting on June 2nd to debate formally and decide on what 'project' to adopt and proceed to seek to implement over the coming months.

Web-site – after a longer than expected gestation period, the new Parish Council web-site finally came on stream. The brief to the developers had been to provide the Parish

with a more attractive, more friendly, and more inclusive 'tool' for the community to use. It makes the digital archive of the Council's papers and activities easier to find and access. But more excitingly the enhanced and new sections covering 'Parish News and Information', 'Community Facilities and Services', 'Local Organisations and Services' and 'Parish Notice Board and Social Links' should be a benefit to us all.

The developers have done a good job building us a 'new house' to replace our old shed, and Suzanne in the Parish office has done a wonderful job at decorating and equipping the new digital home – the only problem is persuading more neighbours to come and visit! So if you have not looked at what is on offer try Googling 'Shere Parish Council', take a quick tour and give us your reaction.



New play and exercise Equipment – Whether you have a toddler to amuse, excited grandchildren to exhaust, or want some exercise to keep yourself fit and healthy, the Parish has invested in new facilities to help. At Goose Green I think we now have one of the best play parks around! With a replacement zip-wire fully functioning, and two new multi-person swings installed it really is exciting, and worth getting in your car if necessary, to bring your own and visiting children and grandchildren for a visit. And the first part of the newly created woodland adventure/nature trail, which is next to the play area – with low trees to clamber on - is there for even the youngest toddlers to enjoy (under your supervision!). On the sports ground in Shere the now-functioning skate ramp at last offers the juniors and younger teenagers an activity geared to their enthusiasms – and the newly installed circuit of outdoor exercise equipment could help all of us – adults and teenagers over 14 – to keep more fit and agile.

Defibrillators and Shere Surgery support – at the other end of the health spectrum the Council purchased four defibrillators – one for each Village. On behalf of the community thanks are extended to the Co-op, Shere; The Hurtwood, Peaslake; The Compasses Inn, Gomshall and the Royal Oak, Holmbury St Mary for kindly agreeing to have a unit, which requires a power connection, fixed to their premises. The Council also took the decision to respond positively to the Shere Surgery's general appeal for funding for a dedicated power generator to ensure they are able to function even when there might be an interruption in the local power supply – which does happen on occasions!



Supporting Village Halls – as a Parish we are unusual in that the Council itself does not own, and have to fund, a normal 'VILLAGE HALL' - Tanyard Hall is more of an office, and the two meeting rooms are really only suitable for groups of 30/40 to hire. But as a community we are very lucky to have three superb, independently managed and funded Village Halls in Shere, Peaslake and Holmbury. But the fact that we do not have responsibility for these halls has not prevented the Council being able to provide direct support. In the last year the Council has either completed or undertaken to provide the following direct help:

- at Holmbury the Council has in the recent past contributed some £10,000 towards a major refurbishing/building project - that has produced a magnificent venue. In this last year the Council funded the surfacing and edging for the car park to make it an even better venue for meetings, events, parties and receptions.
- similarly, in 2015/16 the Council paid for the resurfacing and improvements to the car park at Peaslake Hall.
- and the Council has just purchased new stage curtains and new MORE

COMFORTABLE seats for Shere Village Hall - to improve the cinema 'experience' that is organised, for all parts of the Parish, on a monthly basis.

- the Council, having been asked by Peaslake Councillors for some financial help has committed to donating some new seating for Peaslake Hall.



Maintenance, repair and security – a large part of the work and responsibility of the Council concerns the more mundane and ongoing - never ending really – tasks that can be thought of as general maintenance and preservation of the villages and our environment. Some of this work we can undertake via our own resources – sometimes money to directly engage the specialist, sometimes use of our own, but limited, manpower. The improved lighting, together with the CCTV system, that was installed at Shere car park during the year falls into the category of 'under our control'. But unfortunately much that needs to be done in this area has to be accomplished through getting other agencies who are both operationally and financially responsible, to actually take the necessary action – AND UNFORTUNATELY THIS CAN BE FRUSTRATINGLY SLOW AND DIFFICULT. Frustrating for us as rate payers who need the work carried out and for Joy and Suzanne in the office who have to chase and badger those responsible, **whilst dealing with the results of our frustrations!**

Repair to Shere Car Park was a case in point – we all experienced the need for repairs over a long period – and were asked why did we not just get on with it? Why we did not just get on with it was that it was Guildford's (expensive) responsibility and had we spent Parish funds on doing it ourselves this would have been money we could not have got back.

So the office badgered, and Councillors met officials and **eventually** the repairs were carried out. It is now much improved and does seem to have held up better over this last winter. Does this work represent a permanent fix? Who knows?!

Major Issues Ongoing – under the category of issues that were not solved, despite efforts throughout the year, **two stand out**. We have so far failed to achieve the much requested and ever more needed ban on the unnecessary transiting of HGVs through the centre of Shere. And we have so far failed to find the leverage needed to force Thames Water to effectively address the flooding and sewage problems in Peaslake. The battles on both these fronts are priorities for the Council over the coming 12 months.

Finance - the Precept is the money raised by the Parish Council through the Council Tax. It funds the staff salary costs and all routine costs of 'maintaining' the Parish. This also includes all Donations given to support local organizations, and the funding (sometimes with the help of additional Grants obtained) of all projects and additions to the Parish facilities that the Council agrees to undertake. The Precept for 2016/17 is £115,000 plus Council Tax Support Grant of £5,303.

Thanks to:

- Parish Councillors; Joy Millett, the Parish Clerk and Suzanne Hoyland, Assistant to the Parish Clerk for their time, hard work and dedication;
- Guildford Borough Councillors Richard Billington and David Wright and Surrey County Councillor Keith Taylor for their advice and regular attendance at meetings;
- David Colebrook for ongoing repairs to the playing field in Peaslake;
- Judy Colebrook for maintaining the flower tubs in Peaslake;
- Christina Gorsuch (and the team) and Graham Eusden for caring for the Shere ducks;
- Brian Hilsdon and Graham Rapley, the Council contractors;
- Melanie Fontana and Tristan Greatrex for their gardening and improvement works around Shere village.

ROY DAVEY (Chairman)

Parish Council Information

Its role - Shere Parish Council is a non-political Council, unlike some others in the Borough and is entirely voluntary. This means that the Councillors do not claim any remuneration for their work.

Shere Parish is the largest in the area within Guildford Borough. It serves 4 villages: the villages of Gomshall, Holmbury St Mary, Peaslake and Shere and a 5th area, being a large part of Abinger Hammer excluding the village centre. The Parish is unique in the amount of land it owns and leases and in the tourist and film companies attracted to it. These influence the Parish greatly as regards the facilities it is able to offer and the character of the environment it seeks to preserve.

At least 9 full Council Meetings are held each year as well as many other Committee meetings. **All Council/Committee meetings are open to the public and there is at least one adjournment during each meeting to enable members of the public to ask questions or to address the Council.** Meetings are usually held in the Council offices at Tanyard Hall. Dates and times of these meetings are published on the village notice boards and on the Council's website. A short report of each Council meeting is published in the Parish magazines and the full Minutes of all recent Council and Committee meetings are available on the Council's website together with the contact details of individual Councillors.

Routine Services provided by the Parish Council - much of the Council's work each year involves the management of ongoing services across the Parish and involvement in statutory consultation processes. This entails: maintenance and safety management of land and buildings in the Parish which the Council owns or leases (including 4 village centres, 5 play areas, 5 recreational areas, Tanyard Hall and 4 car parks); the upkeep of bus shelters, seats, notice boards and village signs within the Parish. Grass cutting of 34 different areas and the provision of the public toilets in Shere. The Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications in the Parish and liaises with other authorities e.g. Police, Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council. It is also Consultee on a whole range of policy documents from other authorities.

How to contact Shere Parish Council for assistance or information:

Council Office: Tanyard Hall, 30 Station Road, Gomshall, GU5 9LF. Tel: 01483 203431
Email – clerk@ShereParishCouncil.gov.uk
website – shereparishcouncil.gov.uk
Please note that all correspondence for the Council should be sent to the Clerk, Joy Millett, at Tanyard Hall.

Councillors (as at May 2015): North Ward (Shere & Gomshall)

Candace Brooke, The Old Netley Mill, Shere Road, Gomshall, GU5 9HA. 01483 203267
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Jonathan Cross, 1 Shere Court, Hook Lane, Shere GU5 9QH. 01483 203443
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Roy Davey, Fernside, Upper Street, Shere, GU5 9JE. 01483 202443
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Brian Grover, Ivy Cottage, Middle Street, Shere, Gu5 9HF. 01483 203428
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James Hutton, Netley House, Shere Road, Gomshall, GU5 9QA. 01483 203800
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South East Ward (Holmbury St. Mary & a large part of Abinger Hammer)

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Christopher Carlisle, Upfolds House, Holmbury Lane, Holmbury RH5 6ND. 01306 621209
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