



## Chairman's report April 2007/March 2008

We say the same every year that 'this has been a busy year for the Parish Council' but again it is true! In January Councillor Brian Reeves stood down from the Parish Council but he continues to work with the Village Partnership on Party in the Park. In 8 April 2008 the Parish Council co-opted Rob Ashley to fill the vacancy left by Brian. Rob is General Manager at PGL Little Canada and he is already actively involved on our Party in the Park Working Group. Also in April we were saddened by the death of Councillor Keith Varcoe who had been battling with illness for some time. Keith will be sadly missed by us all.

A big part of the Parish Council's routine work is in respect of planning. We comment on every planning application submitted for the village and sometimes make site visits to consider applications in more detail. On average we have dealt with about 6 applications per month.

We continue to work closely with the Isle of Wight Council and have met on numerous occasions throughout the year to talk on a wide variety of issues but mostly in connection with traffic issues and planning. After what seems like years we have successfully lobbied for a pedestrian crossing near Harwood's garage. This will form part of the safe route to school as well as helping people cross this very busy stretch of road. It is hoped that the crossing will be installed during 2008/2009.

We have also been working with the Isle of Wight Council on an empowerment pilot. This has involved devising a framework which will lead to more control by parish councils on the way in which local services are run and managed. The initiative gives various options; from monitoring of IW Council contracts right through to transfer of assets. It is an optional scheme but will bring about some exciting possibilities for all Parish Councils on the Island in the future. In the first instance, we at Wootton Bridge Parish Council have agreed to take up a monitoring role which could include the toilets and street cleansing contracts.

The biggest project we have undertaken this year is the Joannes Walk Village Square scheme. This has been another example of partnership working with the Isle of Wight Council and will provide a central focal point in the village where craft fairs and small local events can be held. We will

also be providing a Christmas tree in the Square each year and a flagpole will be erected.

Our recreation ground Phase 2 Working Group has continued to work hard behind the scenes on the proposed new Sports and Fitness Centre at the recreation ground. All the existing sports users are involved in the project, the aim of which is to promote and encourage sporting development in the village. This is a big project for us and the latest situation is that we are currently investigating management structures and grant bid processes.

In June 2007 the Parish Council adopted a new procedure whereby members of the public can now participate in Parish Council meetings. The time is normally limited to 5 minutes per person and members of the Parish Council fully support and encourage public participation in their meetings. It has led to lively debate and has given a new dimension to the meetings.

At the time of writing we are aware that we are to have an election to fill the vacancy left by Keith Varcoe. I would urge you most strongly to exercise your democratic right and vote. The election is on Thursday 17 July 2008.

The Parish Council continues to participate in training for its members and the Clerk. Training is also a requirement we must meet as part of the rigorous process we have to go through to retain our Quality status, of which we must re-apply for in October 2008. It is vital that the Parish Council keeps abreast of the latest laws and regulations and the comprehensive training programme offered by the Isle of Wight Council helps us to do this.

Finally the Parish Council has responded to a wide range of consultations including issues associated with; traffic, the Island Plan, beach cleaning contracts, street trading license applications and electoral reviews.

Remember, the Parish Council is here to represent you! There are several ways you can contact us or let us know your views: at Parish Council meetings, by calling into the HIC in Brannon Way, by emailing us or by telephoning us. Also you can visit our web site [www.woottonbridge.com](http://www.woottonbridge.com) where you can view our meeting agendas, our meeting minutes and access information on other Parish Council activities.

**Ken Morris, Chairman**

## WOOTTON BRIDGE VILLAGE PARTNERSHIP AND REGENERATION REPORT

The Village Partnership is made up of over 40 representatives from all walks of village life. It is a highly successful group which has raised well in excess of £250,000 since its inception back in 1999. Projects undertaken include the Doorstep Green, the Village Guide and the Walks about Wootton project.

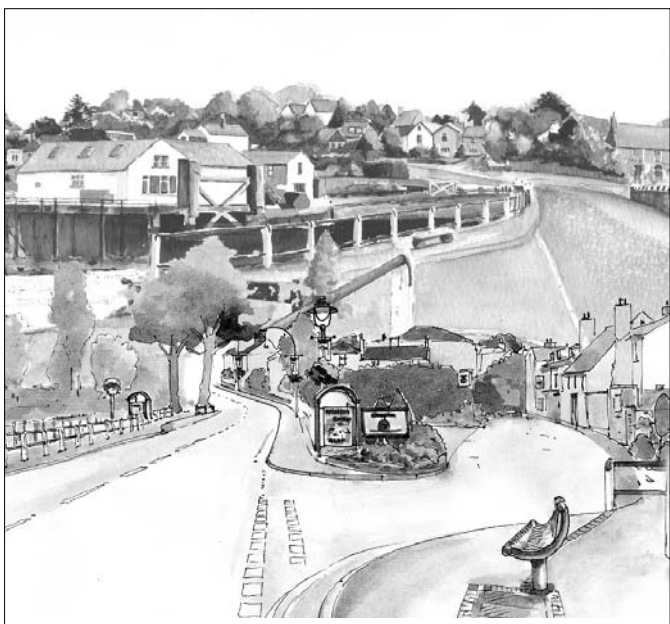
Ongoing projects are Party in the Park but also, over the past year, the membership has been looking at reviewing the Village Design Statement which is now in need of updating. We have also been working with the Parish Council on the Older Persons Initiative, which involves helping them to get the best out of village life. In this connection we are working with the Church to develop the Tea at Three facilities at St Marks and the annual outing. There is also a new initiative being devised, the Wootton Community Call service. This will involve a regular telephone call to older and more vulnerable people in the village to check they are safe and well. The service will be based at the Help and Information Centre and will be operated by volunteers.

Members of the Partnership are also involved in the recreation ground Phase 2 project – the Sports and Fitness Centre.

The Partnership has met twice over the year. The Partnership Executive, which is the decision making arm of the Partnership, has met on three occasions.

Although professionally run – being set up under the auspices of the Parish Council – the Partnership is an informal and well motivated group that really gets things done in the village. Everyone is welcome to join. If you are interested please contact any one of your councillors or myself and we will give you more details.

**Ken Morris, Chairman**



## WOOTTON BRIDGE HELP AND INFORMATION CENTRE REPORT. (HIC)

The Help and Information Centre continues to become more and more well used with over 5,000 enquiries logged during 2007/2008. We receive a huge variety of enquiries; from potholes in the road to planning issues. If we don't know the answer we usually know someone who does.

Never a week goes by without someone saying how useful it is to have such a facility in the village. We find that those without transport, the less abled and mothers with young children particularly appreciate having this local centre, especially for Isle of Wight Council queries.

The office is also very useful for consultation exercises. Our Public Realm Scheme Phase 2 illustrations have been on display since last July and many local people have been in to view them and make their comments. At present we also have on display the illustrations for the new play equipment at the recreation ground. If you have never been to the Centre please call in. We have a wealth of village, Island and national information available.

### OPENING TIMES.

<b>Parish Council</b>	Mon to Fri 10.00am -1.30pm
<b>IW Council</b>	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 9.15am - 1.00pm.
<b>Tree Warden</b>	First Thurs in month 10.00am-12.00pm.
<b>Beat Officer &amp; PCSO</b>	First Tuesday in month 10.00am-12.00pm or messages can be left for PC Massey or PCSO Katy Berry at HIC.
<b>Parish Councillor surgeries</b>	By appointment - contact HIC.
<b>IW Councillor Surgery</b>	By appointment - contact HIC.
<b>Computer courses</b>	Every Wednesday.

### OTHER USES.

- Parish Council meetings.
- Partnership meetings.
- Regeneration meetings.
- Party in the Park meetings.
- Recreation ground Phase 2 meetings.

### MARKETING.

Information included in Parish Council newsletters on web site and also in Bridge.

### CCTV.

Our digital recorder continues to be of help to the Police in solving crime.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY.

Health and Safety policies for the HIC are in the Parish Council office plus the risk assessment.

### PHOTOCOPYING/FAXING AND LAMINATING.

We have extended our photocopying service to include faxing and laminating.

### COMMUNICATIONS.

The plasma screen is on show in the HIC and displays local information and matters of interest including a slide show of Wootton Bridge in the past.

**Lynda Smith, Clerk**

**PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS.**

The following report shows the receipts and payments for 2006/2007 which were the last to be audited by the Audit Commission. The precept for that year was £37,300 (Tax base 1482) which represents approximately £25.16 per year for a Band D property or 48p a week.

No matters giving cause for concern came to the attention of either the Internal Auditor or the District Auditor. Copies of the Income & Expenditure Account and Supporting Statements can be obtained from the HIC. The books were successfully signed off by the District Auditor on 13 December 2007. Local government electors have the opportunity to question the auditor about the accounts and have the right to attend to the auditor and make objections to the accounts or any item in them. Full details on how this can be done are posted on the Village Notice Board and at the HIC prior to each annual audit (see below for 2007/2008 audit).

The balance at 31 March 2007 is made up of reserves for expenditure such as election fund contingency and match funding allocation also grant funding set aside for specific projects. The Parish Council can often double its own funds with grants it obtains from other sources.

Any questions can be directed to me at the HIC any weekday morning.

The date for the 2007/2008 audit of accounts is 4 August 2008. As part of the audit process you can view the accounts at the HIC between 7 July 2008 and 4 August 2008, weekday mornings. The council tax precept for 2007/2008 is set at £45,000 (Tax Base 1476). This represents £30.48 approximately per household at Band D for the year or 58p per week.

Lynda Smith, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

<b>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2007</b>		
31 March 06		Current year end 31 March 2007
<b>INCOME</b>		£
35,700	Precept	37,300
50,133	Partnership/Regeneration funds	35,982
3,993	Community Budget	-
1,333	Interest on investments/bank interest	2,018
970	{Grass cutting grant}	779
	{Churchyard maint'ance grant}	
250	PAYE Online filing incentive	250
-	Parish Award Scheme	5,000
250	St Marks PCC grant	-
	Wootton in Bloom	40
	HIC Income	120
<b>92,629</b>		<b>TOTAL INCOME 81,489</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		£
20,859	General Administration incl. salaries	24,566
1,170	Community Budget <i>funded admin</i>	-
1,446	Community Budget <i>capital</i>	2,076
-	Capital schemes	560
4,342	<i>QPIF Capital</i>	-
150	S137 payments	50
3,235	Help and Information Centre	3,768
1,168	Parks and open spaces	1,152
	Partnership/Regeneration projects:	
2,342	Parish Council Funded}	13,566
43,276	Grant Funded}	-
1,512	Churchyard maintenance	1,193
50	Miscellaneous and grants	1,566
129	Wootton in Bloom	115
-	Partnership/Regeneration admin	
154	Seats/hanging baskets/Christmas tree	216
-	Match funding allocation	
<b>79,833</b>		<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE 48,828</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>		
46,481	Balance at 1 April 2006	59,277
92,629	Add total income	81,489
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139,110		140,766
79,833	Deduct total expenditure	48,828
		<hr/>
59,277	<b>BALANCE AT 31 MARCH 2007</b>	<b>91,938</b>
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## GENERAL INFORMATION.

### PARISH COUNCILLORS: -

Ken Morris            Chairman  
Steve Porter        Vice Chairman  
Rob Ashley  
Barry Abraham  
Brian Ballard  
Mrs Wendy Jacobs  
Larry Laws  
Mrs Liz Loughlin  
Roy Murphy

### OFFICERS

Mrs Lynda Smith    Parish Clerk  
Mrs Madge Reeves   Assistant Parish Clerk  
Mr Gordon Tutton   Financial Assistant

(Vacancy - to be filled by election 17 July 2008)

## MEETINGS.

The Parish Council usually meets on the third Tuesday in every month except August when no meeting is held. We meet at 7.00pm in the Primary School and members of the public and press are welcome to attend. Members of the public are able to participate in meetings and there is also an Open Forum at the start of every meeting where issues can be raised that are not included on the agenda. Notices of the agendas are posted on the village notice boards, on the web site and at the HIC. Sometimes extra meetings are held to deal with urgent matters such as planning.

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING.

Additionally there is a statutory Annual Parish Meeting held during April. The Annual Meeting provides another opportunity for residents to come along and address the Parish Councillors or just to have a say on matters of interest or concern. Reports are given by the Parish Council Chairman, Clerk, Village Partnership Chairman, County Councillor, Tree Warden and Beat Officer.

## PARISH COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Of the 11 scheduled monthly meetings held between 1 April 2007 and 31 March 2008  
Parish Councillor attendance was as follows:-

Barry Abraham 7    Brian Ballard 9    Wendy Jacobs 10    Larry Laws 10    Liz Loughlin 11  
Ken Morris 11    Roy Murphy 11    Steve Porter 11    Brian Reeves 7\*    Keith Varcoe 3\*

\*Full term not completed.

## OFFICE OPENING TIMES.

Parish Council Office opening times: 10.00am to 1.30pm every weekday.

## HOW TO CONTACT YOUR PARISH COUNCIL.

Parish Councillors/officers can be contacted at the Wootton Bridge Help and Information Centre at 4 & 5 Joanne's Walk, Brannon Way, Wootton Bridge, Isle of Wight, PO33 4NX or on 884555 or by email at [wbpcc@onwight.net](mailto:wbpcc@onwight.net)

Remember that your Parish Councillors give their time for free because they care about the village; they receive no payments or expenses. Also, much of what we achieve is thanks to the many volunteers who help us in all manner of ways. Together we have raised thousands of pounds worth of grant funding for village regeneration projects. It is very rewarding to work together and to see so many projects come to fruition. If you would like to become involved or would like more information please contact any one of your Parish Councillors or the Parish Clerk on 884555.

Questions relating to this report can be addressed to any one of your Parish Councillors or the Parish Clerk at the Help and Information Centre.

This report is also available on the Parish Council's  
[web site at www.woottonbridge.com](http://www.woottonbridge.com)



Wootton Bridge  
PARISH COUNCIL

