

PLAYFORD PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT Year ending 30th April 2008

It is a pleasure to provide a report on the activities of the Parish during the last year. It has in the main been most successful.

Firstly it was a privilege for the Parish to be host to a most informative and enjoyable event in celebration of two hundred years since the abolition of the slave trade. This included the opportunity to meet with the descendants of the Clarkson family and also visit his one-time home - Playford Hall. Many thanks to Brian Seward and his colleagues for their excellent organisation and Tessa and Richard Innes for enabling the visit to Playford Hall.

The Summer Fete was once again, despite poor weather, a great success, and we extend our thanks to Charles Lofts for his generosity in making his garden available, and congratulations to Judith Dunnett and Eileen Stennett and all those who helped to make it a most enjoyable afternoon.

It has also been a very successful year for the Parish Hall and we must congratulate the Trustees and managers for the excellent range of activities that have been provided. Those such as the Pub Night and children's Christmas film show provided specifically to improve the social life of the Parish itself are particularly welcome. In recognition of the fact that these may not always be completely self-funding the Council has agreed for a yearly donation of £250 to the Parish Hall Committee in next year's budget. In addition in the light of the enormous enthusiasm for boules, we have agreed to make a donation to widen the piste to enable more players to be able to play at the same time. Goal posts have now been fully installed and it is good to note that football is being played.

During this meeting, as will be reported later, it has been a successful year financially and we have been able to fund new activities as described but also reduce the precept. We paid particular attention to the environment including the purchase of new litter bins and ensuring improvements to the local footpaths. We do however have major concerns about damage to verges by heavy vehicles and are exploring ways in which these can be minimized.

The Website has been improved thanks to the help of Joan Metcalfe and Phil Holmes - the new address is www.playford.org.uk.

A 'Welcome to Playford' leaflet has been produced and copies are now available.

On the political front there are a number of important changes on the horizon. Most immediately we are, as I am sure everyone is aware, collaborating with Gt and Lt Bealings in the production of a new Parish Plan for each of the villages. This collaboration is in recognition that the three parishes have more in common than that which divides them. However, the differences will be included in potential annexes, to ensure problems unique to each parish are catered for.

Following successful forum meetings including that held in Playford, and subsequent focus group discussions, questionnaires for each resident, each household and for young people have been written. These are now being piloted and it is expected that they will be distributed shortly. In addition we are undertaking focussed interviews with all the stakeholders, organisations, businesses, etc within the parishes, or providing services for them, and the results of these will be combined with the opinions expressed in the questionnaire to form the basis for proposals in the ultimate plan or plans.

The local development framework has now produced draft suggestions for housing development in the district. Details of this will be provided for discussion in the agenda item to follow.

A local government review of the boundary commission is being undertaken and preliminary suggestions will be discussed under the agenda item to follow.

Finally, as your new Chairman, I would like to thank my colleagues on the Parish Council for the support they have given, and I am confident that we can look forward to another successful year in the Parish in 2008/9.