

RAYNE PARISH COUNCIL
Annual Report
MAY 2001

The Annual Report by the Clerk represents a record of the work and the achievements of Rayne Parish Council during the past twelve months. The information selected to be included in this report is done so selectively and it is hoped that no important information is omitted. The Clerk wishes to cause no offence to any member.

The current council has now completed two years of the four-year term.

ATTENDANCE RECORD

Further to the agreement that the attendance of members be recorded annually at the Parish Meeting, the following table was prepared.

<u>Clr's Name</u>	<u>Number of Possible Attendance's</u>	<u>Number of Actual Attendance's</u>
Giles	14	12
Jiggins	14	11
Kukiewicz	14	13
Lees	14	13
MacNee	14	14
Meadows	14	13
Moore	14	5
Roberts	14	11
Shepherd	14	5
Smith	14	10
Wootton	14	8

Apart from attendance at the monthly meetings, members of this council attend a great many meetings listening to issues relevant to the community in which we live. Where and when appropriate they voice local feeling. Attendance at site meetings is a regular occurrence, trying to obtain the best possible outcome for the village of Rayne.

A Public Forum is held at the start of each and every Parish Council Meeting. This is a time when members of the community are invited to speak to or question members. Many issues are raised during this forum and the council believes that it is an important part of the meeting. Trying to resolve the issues raised is not always easy as Parish Councils have very little statutory power; achievement is usually made through communications with the responsible authority.

INTRODUCTION

The Annual Assembly and Parish Meeting is being held on the same evening as the monthly parish meeting as has become the custom over the past years.

The council has seen no change in members during this year.

There is a new Clerk following the resignation of Joy Shepherd who stepped down in May after 6 years. The council wishes to record their thanks for the work undertaken during her time as Clerk and for the continued support offered to her replacement, Mel Whiteside.

COUNCILLORS MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY 2000 – 2001

Harold Giles	Footpath Committee, Planning Committee, Road Inspection Steward.
Roger Jiggins	Chairman (until 1 Aug), Vice Chair (from 1 Aug), BALC, Fritchway Liaison Committee, Tree Warden, Control of work in The Grounds.
Kate Kukiewicz	Vice Chair (until 1 Aug), Chair (from 1 Aug), School Governor, EALC, Rayne Village Society, Planning Committee, Parish Passenger Representative
Ian MacNee	Traffic Management, EALC, Road Inspection Steward, Health Authority Representative, Skate Ramp Representative
Tony Meadows	Planning Committee, Fritchway Liaison Group, EALC, BALC.
Tony Moore	Village Hall Toilet & Shower Refurbishment.
Pat Roberts	Road Inspection Steward, Cluster Group Co-ordinator, Internal Auditor, Felsted United Charities, EALC, BALC.
Diane Shepherd	Village Enhancement Project
Roy Smith	Village Hall Committee, Planning Committee, Road Inspection Steward, Notley Liaison Group, Year End Accounts Check
John Wootton	Footpath Representative, Internal Audit Assesment

EALC – Essex Association of Local Councils.

BALC – Braintree Association of Local Council.

NON COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

Mrs Sue Pertwee

Sue continues to undertake the responsibility for the flowerbeds on the Village Green, a task she has done for many years. This council wishes to record their thanks for her continued support.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Cllr Meadows is now entering the third year of his four-year term as District Councillor. He continues to raise and support issues that are important to the parishioners of Rayne. He also produces a written report at each meeting on his work for this community.

THE CHAIRMAN

Cllr Roger Jiggins stepped down as Chairman in June, handing over the reigns to Cllr Mrs Kate Kukiewicz (formally Vice Chair). Both work extremely hard for the parish council, attending meetings regularly to ensure that the voice of Rayne is heard.

Cllr Mrs Kukiewicz is also a School Governor and has taken an interest on consultations at County level on the issues of education and transport.

Cllr Jiggins had served as Chairman for a number of terms and the council wishes to record their thanks for his hard work and commitment whilst Chairman.

VICE CHAIRMAN

Following her move to Chairman, Cllr Mrs Kukiewicz stepped down as Vice Chair, a role she had undertaken since May 1999. This post was taken over by Cllr Jiggins.

Cllr Jiggins is a representative on the BALC and has served on the executive of the EALC. With the approval and support of members, he continues to organise the work within the village on the grounds, ensuring that the two contracted groundsmen carry out the requirements of this council.

CLUSTER GROUPS

These groups have been set up by the District Council to enable small groups of localised parishes to meet together with an officer of the District Council to discuss a variety of issues relating to the area.

Cllr Mrs Roberts is the Cluster Group Co-ordinator for this council.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Cllr Meadows regularly visits sites in Rayne reporting back to the council. He has, where necessary, taken advice from officers at the District Council. All members may take part in planning related issues, but if they have an interest either pecuniary or non-pecuniary this must be noted and they are barred from any discussion.

Planning applications are determined by the District Council, within the framework of the law. Parish Councils only have power to make recommendations or to comment on any application, the District Council is not obliged to respond to them.

HEALTH MATTERS

For a number of years Cllr Ian MacNee has attended meetings and reported back to this council. He is a member of the working party that can make recommendations to the Authority. This work is very time consuming in the amount of reading that Ian completes and the number of meetings he attends. The thanks of Rayne Parish Council are noted for the valuable commitment that Ian has made.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Members continue to monitor the condition of the roads in Rayne. This is predominantly completed by the road stewards. Other members regularly raise issues at meetings when they become apparent. Cllr MacNee continues to report street light failures.

The implementation of the agreed speed reductions for School Road and Queenborough Lane came into effect on 26th May. Unfortunately, the New Road footpath continues to be second on the Locally Determined Programme but it is hoped that the construction of this will be completed during this financial year.

Following concerns regarding children riding their bikes from the Fritchway directly onto New Road, a meeting was held between the council, the Ranger and Highways. This cumulated in the Ranger reinstating the fence.

Representation from residents in Brunwin Road has highlighted their concerns over safety due to the increased traffic and type of vehicle using this route. Speed checks and a traffic survey have been carried out, the latter showing the bulk of traffic is from the school run. Members are investigating the implementation of a 20mph speed limit and have the support of the local Police for this.

Increased traffic flow and speed of vehicles is also a problem in other areas of Rayne, mainly due to people avoiding the A120 and other main routes. This problem could worsen with the construction of the new A120 and members will be meeting with ECC to discuss traffic calming measures on the old A120.

LOCAL POLICING IN RAYNE

PC Dave Blackburn continues to be the PC responsible for the parish. Dave attends meetings where possible, often when he is not on duty. The parish council continues to work together with the police to resolve issues of vandalism, this has paid off with the number of incidents decreasing over the past year. The Rural Police Unit is now up and running in Shalford. Following concerns over access to the local police unit, PC Blackburn agreed that his mobile phone number be issued in the monthly parish magazine.

VILLAGE HALL

The management of the hall continues to be run successfully by the Village Hall Committee. The Committee is made up of local people with an interest in the community, who all give their time voluntarily to achieve the smooth running of the hall. The numbers club is now in its third year and the fundraising committee raise extra revenue by way of discos, quizzes and the now annual Craft & Produce Show – a big success with residents. The Parish Council's thanks, on behalf of residents in Rayne, are recorded in this report.

The refurbishment of the Toilet and Shower is now complete, a great improvement to the facilities of the hall. This has been a large financial project for the Parish Council, with a donation from the Cricket and Football clubs. Although Cllr Tony Moore has suffered from poor health for a number of years, he has been able to manage the refurbishment project and thanks for his work is noted in this report.

WORK WITHIN THE GROUNDS

Cllr Roger Jiggins has been responsible for the control of the work in the grounds during the last year. Both the groundsman, Mr Ray Peake, and the assistant groundsman, Mr Allen Taylor, work very hard in all areas of the village. Ray undertakes grass cutting, hedge trimming, litter picking, painting and other general duties with Allen mainly concentrating his work at Oak Meadow but assisting in other areas as necessary. The council wishes to record their thanks for the hard work and dedication shown by Ray and Allen, and for the contribution made by David McGregor who continues to cut the village green.

SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Cllr Mrs Kukiewicz has been a Parent School Governor prior to her appointment by this council. Her experience has been welcomed by the primary school and she has taken an active role in the school's affairs.

THE STREET ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

This project was lead by Cllr Diane Shepherd and was intended to improve the appearance of The Street so that it resembled a village road and not the old A120. The addition of a seat and flower tubs in the area opposite The Welsh Princess was halted by a very small number of residents complaining that the seat would attract youths and noise.

The project was then transferred to the playing field with the seat being sited next to the skateboard ramp. However, due to the unfortunate closure of the Foundry, who were to make the seat, the project had to be brought to an end.

YOUTH REVIEW

The established groups of Scouts, Guides, Brownies, Cubs and Beavers are appreciated by the community for the successful groups that they run. Other groups within the village, in particular the efforts of Rayne Cricket Club to involve the youth, are very much in evidence and the Parish Council's appreciation is noted for their work in our community.

The construction of a skate ramp is still progressing and it is hoped that the coming year will see its completion. It is widely known that without the continued dedication of Cllr Ian MacNee, the project would not have got this far. Members of this council would like to record their thanks for all of his hard work to ensure the construction of this facility goes ahead for the youth of the village.

FINANCIAL ISSUES

The Clerk, Mel Whiteside, is the confirmed Responsible Financial Officer with Cllr Pat Roberts undertaking the responsibility for internal auditing. Cllr Smith oversees the end of year accounts.

The precept for the year 2001/2002 was set at the meeting in November 2000, where members considered various projects from organisations within the village. Members agreed at this meeting to purchase a new ride-on mower for use by the groundsman for grass cutting within the village. Further funding has since been secured from BDC to undertake additional cutting for the year 2001/2002.

TO CONCLUDE

Parish councils have little or no statutory powers. Achievements can only be made through negotiations and direct requests made to the relevant authorities. The work often takes years to come to fruition and on occasions little success is shown for the commitment made. The members of Rayne Parish Council all work hard to serve their community. They attend a substantial amount of meetings, representing the interests of the residents of Rayne.

This year has seen the increase of the village bus service (a somewhat contentious issue), the worst rain in 200 years causing serious floods almost cutting off the village, and the closure of all footpaths due to Foot & Mouth Disease amongst other things. The coming year should see the New Road footpath finally constructed and the youth of Rayne using the new skate ramp.

This only leaves the thanks.

Thanks to all members who have served the council during the last year, giving their time and knowledge freely for the benefit of the community.

Thanks, on behalf of the council to the retiring Chairman, Cllr Roger Jiggins and his successor, Kate Kukiewicz. Both give up a tremendous amount of their time to ensure the smooth running and efficiency of the council.

Personal thanks to all members of the council for supporting me in my first year as Clerk, your help and patience is appreciated. Thanks to Joy Sheppard for being at the end of the phone during those first few months and now just an e-mail away. Also to Richard for "sitting in" whilst I was on maternity leave. You have all helped to make my first year a little less scary.

Mel Whiteside
Clerk