

# DANBURY

SPRING 2017

TIMES



No. 45



## ANNUAL REPORT

LOCAL COUNCIL  
AWARD SCHEME  
QUALITY GOLD

### ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**All Danbury residents are invited to attend on Monday April 24th 2017 at the Danbury Sports and Social Centre at 8pm.**

Tea, coffee, soft drinks and biscuits will be available from 7pm and there is a bar on the floor above.  
Various village organisations will have stalls.

A resume of the year by the Chairman of Parish Council will be available together with the Annual Finance Report, and the Parish Council official responses to the proposed 3 large village developments.

**Jenny Robinson from Chelmsford City Council's Planning and Housing Policy team will speak about their new Local Plan.  
Then the Chairman of the Danbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Sue Dobson, will launch the group's consultation with the village, explain its aims and describe the point they have reached with some consultative activities.**

There will be opportunities for questions from the floor after each speaker.

### Have your say in how to create a sustainable village for us all to live in and enjoy.

A Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared for the future of Danbury by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The Plan must reflect your views so we want to meet as many people as possible to allow you to share your opinions with us and ask us questions.

Drop-in sessions have been arranged to receive your views on

**Thursday 4th May & Saturday 6th May between 10 am & 4 pm  
at the Old Pavilion (in the car park opposite the Co-op).**

**We look forward to meeting you there.**



# DANBURY PARISH COUNCIL

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Planning,  
Member of  
Facilities

## ADDITIONAL MEMBERS

**John Alexander**

Planning

**Roger Cole-Jones**  
Danbury Society

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## PARISH COUNCIL STAFF

**Margaret Saunders**

Parish Clerk

**Maria Dyer**

Assistant Clerk

**Hannah Mayes**

Assistant Clerk

**Robin Dickens**

Groundsman

**Lesley Mitchelmore**

Neighbourhood  
Plan Co-ordinator

## NORMAL PARISH OFFICE OPENING TIMES

Monday to Friday 9.15 am to 1 pm.

The Old School House, Main Road,  
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Website: [www.danbury-essex.gov.uk](http://www.danbury-essex.gov.uk)

Like us on Facebook



Our thanks go to The Danbury Society and Baker's who granted £200 & £100 respectively towards the provision of the Christmas tree and lights. The total costs for this including the electricity for the lighting pillar are in the region of £1000.

## CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

Welcome to this issue of Danbury Times which is the annual report of activities and key issues we have dealt with on your behalf. I have kept my comments to important matters and you will find other relevant items elsewhere in this newsletter.

During the last year we have seen a number of **councillor changes**: Gary and Amanda Gardner have moved away from the village and Brian Kennewell has left the Council for personal reasons. I thank them all very much for their valued contributions to the council and the village.

Joining us have been three new members Christopher Baker, Billy Hinken and John Steele. Also during this time your council has funded and recruited Lesley Mitchelmore as the Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator. Welcome to them all.

An essential element of the work of the Parish Council is to undertake the role of 'statutory consultee' on all **planning applications** for development including Conservation area consent and works to trees with preservation orders on them. This is normally undertaken by our Planning Committee which meets every 3 weeks, although as you will be aware more significant applications will be considered through a public meeting.

We have always encouraged developers to come and talk to us (some do – some don't); however although some of them undertake their own 'consultations' we as a council are unable to comment until such time that the application has been submitted to the 'Planning Authority', (Chelmsford City Council), the application checked and validated by them and then sent to us for formal consultation. Plans can change and until formal submission we do not know what we are commenting on.

Comments from the village are very welcome and always taken into account as part of our considerations and formal response; unlike the Parish Council, villagers do not have to wait until the proposal is formalised at the City Council. There are currently 2 other Danbury groups actively publicising and objecting to two recent large development proposals, the long-standing Danbury Society and the new Hands Off Danbury group.

3 major applications have been considered by Parish Council.

These are the application for a 72 bed care home on Bay Green Meadow, that for 140 houses on land East of Little Fields and North of Maldon Road and one for 100 houses on land South of Maldon Road. After 2 public meetings on 29th November 2016 and 14th March 2017 objections to all 3 were submitted by Parish Council to Chelmsford City Council.

The first 2 have subsequently been refused by CCC.

**The full official Parish Council responses are on the Parish Council website.**

I wish to record my **thanks** to everyone who has contributed to village life and to the work of council and wish you all a 'Happy Easter'.

In particular I wish to thank the staff, Margaret, Hannah, Maria, Lesley and Robin for all their hard work, dedication and loyalty. Without them we would not have been able to achieve all that we have.

Thanks also go to my elected colleagues, for their hard work, patience and dedication.

**Stuart Berlyn**  
Chairman

## RIDE FOR HELEN

The Helen Rollason charity's annual Ride for Helen will take place on May 7th; the layby on Herbage Park Road near The Anchor will again be used as a water stop.

## FACILITIES

### Dawson Memorial Field

In view of the exceedingly wet weather over the last few years causing some closures of the football pitches, Essex County Football Association paid for a Pitch Consultant to inspect all the football pitches; the recommended drainage works were carried out and only the odd game has had to be cancelled in the 2016/17 season. In the Essex Playing Fields Association Competition Football Pitch 1 was runner up and the other 3 pitches were given Gold Awards; the playing field in general received a Gold Award, and the Cricket Ground and Playground both achieved Silver Awards. The badly worn artificial cricket wicket has been removed in readiness for the new season, when both cricket teams who held their 2016 home games here plan to return for the 2017 season. There were two successful 'Play in the Park' sessions for the children in August – the second including a visit from the 'Mobile Zoo'. All remedial works from the Annual Inspection in the playground were carried out. A bench was installed outside the Sports Centre overlooking the cricket and football ground in memory of Mike Wood – a Danbury Parish Councillor for 20 years.

### Danbury Sports & Social Centre (DCA)

LED lights were installed in the bollards on the path and drainage works completed in the changing rooms. Work on the sports hall roof and doors is on-going. Unfortunately due to inclement weather the Village Fayre, very well organised by the DCA, was not as well attended as was hoped – there are no plans for a 2017 Village Fayre.

### Ponds

Thanks to residents and Councillors works were carried out at both Eves Corner and Runsell Green ponds. At Eves Corner it is proposed with the permission of, and in conjunction with the National Trust, to reduce the reeds, opening out the pond area.

### Trees

The Parish Council annual inspection of all the trees on Parish Council land to establish works required for the health of the trees and public safety was carried out in November – only low priority works were identified.

### The Old Pavilion

Additional insulation and crawl boards were installed in the loft and new flooring has now been laid. Broadband access is being investigated by the DCA.

### Noticeboards at Elm Green & Runsell Green

Mindful that not all residents can access the Parish Council web site, these two noticeboards have been renovated and are updated on a monthly basis.

## DATES OF MEETINGS

### APRIL

Mon	3rd	<i>Planning</i>
Mon	24th	<i>ANNUAL PARISH MEETING</i>

### MAY

Mon	8th	<i>Planning</i>
Wed	10th	<i>ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL</i>
Mon	15th	<i>Environment</i>
Wed	17th	<i>Facilities</i>
Wed	24th	<i>Resources</i>

### JUNE

Mon	5th	<i>Accounts, then Planning</i>
Wed	28th	<i>Resources</i>

### JULY

Mon	3rd	<i>Planning</i>
Mon	10th	<i>Environment</i>
Wed	12th	<i>Facilities</i>
Wed	19th	<i>Resources</i>
Wed	26th	<i>Parish Council</i>
Mon	31st	<i>Planning</i>

*All meetings begin at 7.30pm except  
Annual Parish Meeting at 8pm*



## DANBURY NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE

### Introduction

As a consultee the Parish Council can only make recommendations on planning applications which will be taken into account by CCC when making their own decisions. At present we have the Danbury Planning Framework (DPF) which is part of Chelmsford City Council's Local Planning Framework valid until 2021; this DPF is a **supplementary** document.

**The Localism Act (2011)** introduced by the Government was an important step towards giving **local people** the right to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, setting out policies on local development and use of land in the Parish, then agreeing the plan with the local authority. The Neighbourhood Plan for Danbury will, when approved, become part of the Chelmsford's Local Development Plan. This will be a **statutory plan** against which all planning applications in Danbury will be tested and will run to 2036. It will conform with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This will give the community a real say in determining the future of our village. Our volunteers have already started work.

### Where are we now?

There are already a number of committed volunteers working on the plan, but we would welcome help from anyone who would like to be part of determining the future of our village.

So far they have:

1. Established a Steering Group consisting of local volunteers including 2 Parish Councillors, set up a constitution and elected one local volunteer as Chairperson.
2. Defined and had approved the local "neighbourhood area" for the plan.
3. Set up a **Communications working party** to develop a communications strategy.
4. Set up a **Visions and Objectives working party** to formulate the future for our village.
5. Set up a **Research working party** to determine historical data, identify land use within the village and create consultation opportunities to gain the views of our villagers.
6. Determined local skills, expertise and training needs to help complete the project.

The group is currently preparing a budget to secure ongoing funding from the Government via the Parish Council and also looking at possible sponsorship from local businesses and organisations, if appropriate.

This process **cannot** be led by the Parish Council as Government regulations state that this plan will be directly the views of the local people. Many of us have skills that we take for granted and everyone has something to offer, computer skills, people skills, delivering leaflets and questionnaires, drafting documents, local history. We do need your views (both good and bad) on environmental issues, transport, housing, leisure, facilities and all aspects of village life. There is much to do and we would welcome help, resources and information from any individuals, organisations and businesses in the area as this is **our plan for our future** and that of the next generation of villagers in Danbury.

## PLANNING

Planning matters have been of high importance for the village during 2016/2017. The Planning Committee met 15 times and considered 88 planning applications, making comments on 33 of these. 6 planning applications were refused by Chelmsford City Council (CCC), 3 withdrawn and the rest were either approved or are still awaiting a decision.

### Proposed Developments

Throughout the year a number of developers and planning consultants have attended Parish Council Planning Committee meetings to speak about potential proposals in public question time.

In January, a representative from Curtin & Co spoke about plans for up to 5,000 homes at Hammonds Farm (on the Danbury boundary) which they would like to be included within CCC's New Local Plan. Another developer, Hill Residential attended a meeting in October regarding approximately 65 dwellings on land between Mill Lane, Millfields and Hyde Lane. No planning application has been received for either proposal at the time of writing.

### Medical Centre

The Medical Centre moved to its new location on Maldon Road during 2016. A planning application for seven (two and three bed) houses was submitted and approved by CCC in September 2016 on the site of the old Medical Centre at Eves Corner. Essex County Council Highways were due to install a pedestrian crossing in Maldon Road near to the new Medical Centre in early 2017.

### Appeal

An outline planning application at Old Chase Farm for 59 houses and a shop was objected to by the Parish Council and refused by Chelmsford City Council in May. An appeal on this site has now gone to the Planning Inspector.

### Trees

A tree grant from Chelmsford City Council was gratefully received to plant two trees in the new flowerbed outside the Old Pavilion. Some tree work has been required close to the Scout Hut and the Scouts are intending to put in an application to build a new hut shortly as the current one is unfit for use due to structural issues. The Parish Council has retained its three volunteer Tree Wardens who have been very pro-active in visiting the sites of tree applications and assisting the Parish Council with their knowledge. There were 51 applications to CCC for works to trees in Danbury.

## ENVIRONMENT

Throughout its usual 6 annual meetings the Environment Committee has continued to monitor the conditions of Danbury's **footways, footpaths and roads**. The proposal for a footway linking the existing Woodhill Road to Mayes Lane footways to be largely along Pennyroyal Road has been approved as a priority scheme for funding by the Local Highways Panel (LHP) for 2017/8. Other footway issues are under investigation. Now that a new Public Rights of Way (PROW) officer has been appointed by Essex County Council (ECC) more reported problems on footpaths should now be tackled, for instance improving Footpath 17. Negotiations on determining and signing a permissive footpath along National Trust land to the South of Woodhill Road are underway. After conducting speed monitoring LHP have rejected a request for a speed reduction along Woodhill Road; the committee have put in a protest.

As far as **parking** problems go, Parish Council put in bollards along the green at Elm Green Lane, and achieved a feasibility study to be conducted by LHP for the creation of a one-way route at the entrances to The Heights.

## ENVIRONMENT (continued)

Unfortunately neither the South Essex Parking Partnership nor LHP would put in restrictions along Well Lane. Currently Parish Council is asking for representation on LHP according to its new Terms of Reference. New litter bins have improved the situation in some areas; shops clear their frontages and volunteer litter pickers continue to help on their local roads so if you would join their numbers, equipment is available: contact the Parish Office.

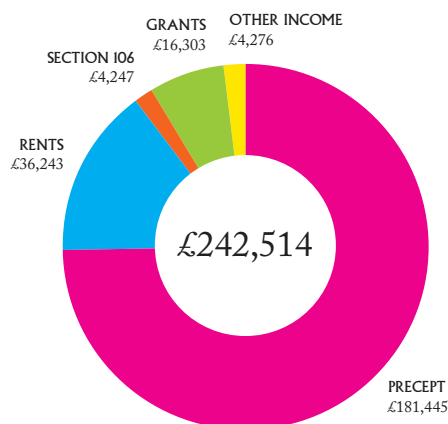
**Project Danbury** is pleased with the new flower bed outside the Old Pavilion though no sponsorship has yet been offered. All 3 primary schools were given a rose, Scarlet Queen Elizabeth II, to commemorate the Queen's 90th birthday, and 3 more were planted in the Old Pavilion bed. Thanks to Esso for their positive response to our request for planters outside the wall alongside the A414 as part of their intended refurbishment. There will also be 2 planters outside the door to the Parish Office to cheer up the approach. Leaflet dispensers are being put up at various points to have the footpath maps more readily available. Further schemes are on hold due to a lack of Councillors.

Thanks go to the village resident who attends and reports back on the **bus** Transportation Partnership meetings in Maldon. A councillor also attends Essex Wildlife Trust's (EWT) **Living Landscapes** meetings and reports back.

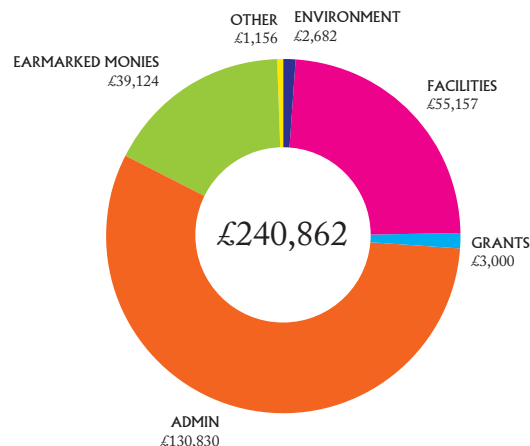
## RESOURCES COMMITTEE

This financial report covers the financial year 1st April 2015 until 31st March 2016. The figures for 1st April 2016 until 31st March 2017 are not completed as yet and are only signed off by the external auditor in September, 2017. The graphs below show the exact income received and the exact expenditure.

Parish Council Income 2015-2016



Parish Council Expenditure 2015-2016



At 31st March, 2016 the Council's reserve figure stood at £203,019 including £65,431 earmarked monies to be spent on projects during the next financial year. The Parish Council must keep in reserve the cost of running the Council for 6 months which equates to approximately £100,000.

The grants figure under income includes the Discretionary Grant of £5978 for 2015/16 from Chelmsford City Council and £10,000 Lottery Grant for the refurbishment of the toilets in the Old Pavilion and the Sports and Social Centre. The Parish Council no longer receives this Discretionary Grant and together with providing the initial money for the Neighbourhood Plan (employing the Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator and paying the insurance for the volunteer workers) has been forced to increase the precept for 2017/18 year. This equates to £4.92 a year /41p a month increase on a Band D property resulting in a precept of £195,596. For the previous 2 years the Council had been able to show a slight reduction in residents' Council Tax payments for Danbury Parish Council due to the tax base increasing as more houses were built i.e. at the Danbury Palace site.

## SUMMARY OF 2016 – 2017

- The Parish Council managed to save a main style Post Office in the Co-operative Store. This was due to the large amount of support received from Chelmsford Co-op Group working in partnership with Post Office Counters Limited. Later in the year saw the closure of Barclays Bank and I am sure all residents are grateful the Post Office remains.
- The Danbury Community Association (Trust) Limited worked with the Parish Council to produce a lease for the Old Pavilion which runs alongside their lease for the Danbury Sports and Social Centre (DSSC) until 2021. The DSSC take all the bookings for the Old Pavilion. Its refurbishment continued with new flooring and the building is now an excellent asset to the village as a hall to use.
- CCTV has been installed at Robin's Nest after the break in during the previous year. The Bowling Club also suffered a break in this year.
- The Parish Council chose not to voice record their Parish Council Meetings.
- The new neighbour packs produced by the Council continue to be well received and are either distributed by councillors or given if people request them at the office.
- A new insurance contract has been arranged with Hiscox which has saved the Parish Council £971.19. This contract runs for 3 years and will go up with inflation.
- It is still unknown who will share the Old School House when the Children's Centre move out. It is understood that their staff will be available from the Chetwood Centre at South Woodham Ferrers. Essex County Council are currently going out to tender for a new occupant of the Old School House.
- The Strategic Plan for the Council which runs until 2021 is available on the Parish Council's web site.
- School visits are being continued, involving Neighbourhood Plan exercises and consultation. The Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator commenced on 1st November, 2016 and as you will see has made a huge difference to moving the plan forward.
- Keeping up to date with the Legionella Regulations has also been challenging and two members of staff have passed their legionella competency qualification. Measures are in place to comply with the statutory requirements in Parish Council owned properties.
- The survey report and results gathered over 2017 regarding the slippage of the path to the tennis/bowling club on Dawson Memorial Field will be discussed and decisions made as to the best way forward.
- The Parish Council normally would run with fifteen members and unless any applicants come forward for the March Parish Council Meeting we have only ten which means we are a third short. Please do look on the web site which explains what is involved or email/telephone me with questions. I am always happy to meet with anyone who is interested and explain the procedure.

**Margaret Saunders**  
Parish Clerk