

Annual Report for The Salings Parish Council



Year ending April 2021

The Parish Council met on the following dates during year 2020-21

13th May AGM Cancelled	10th June
8th July	12th August
9th Sept	14th Oct
11th Nov	9th Dec
13 th Jan 2021	10 th Feb
10 th March	14 th April

Parish Clerk: Mrs Cathryn Carlisle

Elected Officers for the 6 seats are:-

Chairman Kathy Jiggins

Vice-Chairman Sue Baugh

Other Council Members:

Peter Martin

Colin Bennett

Jennifer O'Connell

Richard Aggis

The Salings Parish Council would like to report the following items and services that have been provided during the year up to April 2021

Parish Council Meetings and Election of Officers: There have been 11 Parish Council meetings, an Annual Parish Meeting was cancelled and at the Annual Meeting councilors and parishioners were elected to the following positions:

Village Hall Representatives:- Kathy Jiggins Peter Martin and Colin Bennett

Footpaths: Colin Bennett

Website: Cathryn Carlisle

Chairman's Report

My first year in the Chair has been very much a learning curve, and I must start with a huge thank you to Cathy our Clerk and my fellow Councillors for all their help and support.

Despite the challenges of Covid the work of the P.C. has continued via Zoom throughout lock down, and we have had a very busy year.

We were able to co-opt two new Councillors this year and are pleased to welcome Councillors Jen O'Connell and Richard Aggiss.

We have held numerous additional meetings, both via zoom and socially distanced, with Essex County Highways, Eastlight Housing, Braintree District Council landscaping services and the North Essex Parking Partnership.

Following a meeting with Graham Butland our County Councillor, the local Police Commissioner and other local Parishes, we are currently working on speed and noise issues through our villages and the appalling state of our footpaths and bridleways.

We have hired a handyman for all those jobs that need to be done around the villages, and this has enabled us to install a notice board and a defibrillator in Bardfield Saling. We have cleared and tidied up the play area and will continue to work through a list of additional works to make our villages safe, clean and tidy.

Working together with the Action Group we have helped plant trees and create a wildlife area near the play area.

Alongside the Village Hall Committee we have acted to try to deter drug dealing and anti-social behaviour in the car park by locking the gates overnight.

We have spent many hours preparing and submitting a list of proposals to the Local Highways Panel to try to introduce traffic calming measures through Gt Saling. We are awaiting their decision/approval before we can implement any of these actions. Our thanks go to Cllr Butland for getting a grant to allow us to proceed with this.

The PC continues to closely monitor Braintree District Council and Uttlesford's Local Plans, and we have submitted numerous responses to many applications, including Stanstead Airport Development, Braintree housing numbers, and the new planning proposals, as well of course as our own planning applications.

To help our Residents who are unable to get out at the moment we have provided wool and needles to enable them to make poppies and other decorations that we can place around the villages to celebrate Remembrance Day and other special occasions.

In March this year we were awarded Foundation Level status, one of only 44 other Councils in Essex.

I hope we will continue to be an approachable, pro-active Council and we look forward to working with all of you to make The Salings a wonderful place to live.

Finances:

The Parish Council holds two separate accounts at Barclays Bank PLC in Braintree. A current account for routine daily business and an investment account which holds reserved funds for projects and non-routine expenditure. The Parish Council is VAT registered and claims back VAT on valid expenditure.

Mrs Yvonne Morton undertakes the internal audit and the appointed External auditors are Littlejohn LLP

Precept.

Although the Parish Council has maintained expenses at previous levels the precept has increased due to a reduction in funding from Braintree District Council.

Insurance:

The Parish Council holds insurance cover for its equipment and street furniture.

It also holds public liability insurance, personal accident cover, legal fees and employer's liability insurance. All insurance cover is provided by Allianz Cornhill.

Subscriptions:

The Parish Council subscribes to the following organizations for consultation purposes:

National Association of Local Councils,
Essex Association of Local Councils,
Braintree Association of Local Councils,
Rural Community Council of Essex,
Essex Playing Field Association, 100 Parishes

Grants to local organizations:

Churchyard Grass Cutting £200

Parish Magazine £150

Planning:

The Parish Council considers all proposed planning applications either at a planning sub-committee or at a full council meeting where deadlines allow. Observations are then submitted to Braintree District Council advising where necessary on local information and issues.

The Parish Council is a Statutory Consultee under planning legislation. As such it can make recommendations to Braintree District Council as to whether a particular application should be approved or not but BDC do not have to accept those recommendations. The Parish Council considers planning applications either at a Planning Committee or at a full Council meeting where deadlines allow. Observations are then submitted to Braintree District Council taking into account local information and issues. The Parish Council has looked at in the region of 10 Planning applications during the year. It has also responded to Braintree District Council's Land Allocation review which will form part of Braintree District Council's District Plan.

Grass Verge Grass Cutting:

The Grass cutting is undertaken by MDLandscapes

Street Lighting:

The Parish Council provides streetlights for which power is obtained from E-on Ltd. All lights are annually maintained and cleaned; A & J Lighting undertakes this service. Some of the village lights have been switched to the part night scheme. They go off at midnight and come back on at 5.30am

Street Cleaning:

The Parish Council annually does a litter pick around the villages.

Footpaths;

The Parish Council works in conjunction with Essex County Council through the Parish Paths Partnership scheme to continue to improve our network of footpaths. Work continues in providing more way-markers and bridges to our footpaths. The mowing of the public paths throughout the village is undertaken by Robert Bucknell.

Notice Boards:

The Parish Council provides a Notice Board in both villages. The Clerk regularly updates the notice boards, which provide local Information.

Dog Waste Bins:

These are provided by and emptied by Braintree District Council

Highways:

The Parish Council liaises regularly when problems occur on our roads with Essex County Council.

Website:

The Parish Council's website <https://salings-pc.gov.uk/>

Facebook Page [The Salings Parish Council | Facebook](#)

Contact Details for Clerk and Councilors are on the Website

Meeting Dates

12th May AGM	9th June
14th July	11th August
8th Sept	13th Oct
11th Nov	9th Dec
13 th Jan 2021	10 th Feb
10 th March	14 th April

Annual Parish Meeting to be held later in the year once Covid restrictions are lifted. AGM Date to be confirmed

Attendance Record

	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
J K	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
P M	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
C B	√	√	√	√	X	X	X	√	√	√	√	√
S B	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	√	X	√	X	√
J O	X	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
R A	X	X	X	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
P E	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√
G B	X	X	√	X	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	√

A = Apologies

Y = Attended

Parish Council Meeting are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month in the Village Hall time to be confirmed. Zoom meetings commence at 6 p.m.

Agenda's will be published on the notice board at least 3 clear days in advance of the meeting.

**ANNUAL REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS IN THE THREE FIELDS WITH
GREAT NOTLEY COUNTY DIVISION FROM
COUNTY COUNCILLOR GRAHAM BUTLAND**

The last twelve months have been challenging for all our communities as the effect of the COVID pandemic has been felt throughout the area.

I congratulate all eight Parish Councils on maintaining their services to residents and for the way in which many of them have helped to look after more vulnerable members of the community.

As the local County Councillor, I have not been able, due to lockdown, restrictions, to get around the area as much as I would normally do. Nevertheless, working with the Parish Clerks and being able to attend many of the Parish Council meetings via Zoom I have been able to deal with most of the local issues that have arisen.

Throughout the year Highways issues have tended to dominate the agenda together with flooding matters arising from the wet period in January and February. Essex County Council invited each County Councillor to put forward 50 potholes in their Division for priority treatment. I forwarded all the potholes “nominated” by the Parish Councils and they have been dealt with during the year. However, rather like painting the Forth Bridge, road repairs remain a never-ending task.

In February 2021, I facilitated a meeting between the Parishes and the Essex Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner, Roger Hirst, on the issue of nuisance vehicles speeding through our villages. I am delighted that the Commissioner recognised the disturbance that it causes to residents and that he has agreed an action plan to tackle the issue.

Finally, in 2020-21 the county Council introduced a new Locality Fund

whereby each County Councillor was allocated £10,000 to use in their Division to support local projects.

I was delighted that I was able to support projects in all eight of the parishes as follows,

£2,250	Salings Parish Council to provide wooden gates at entry points to the village.
£1,000	William Bendlowe Charity towards the cost of building a petanque terrain at Shalford Village Hall.
£2,000	St Mary's Church, Wethersfield towards the cost of urgent roof repairs at the church.
£1,000	Panfield Community Association towards the cost of repairs to the roof of the Village Hall.
£1,000	Great Bardfield Parish Council towards the refurbishment of the school green footpath.
£1,000	Great Notley Parish Council to support the upgrading of village maps at the entrances to Great Notley and White Court.
£700	Wethersfield Community Centre to complete flooring in the community centre rooms.
£400	Friends of the Flitch Way to support the maintenance of the area.
£300	Rayne Village Hall to purchase PPE and cleaning supplies during the pandemic.
£132	Finchingfield Guildhall to purchase a whiteboard for the Guildhall.

Let us hope that 2021-22 will see a gradual and safe return to normality.

District Councillor Rayne Ward Annual Report March 2021.

The Rayne Ward consists of Rayne Parish and The Salings Parish.

Let me start this report by congratulating both Rayne Parish Council and The Salings Parish Council for adapting very quickly to the world of

Virtual Meetings and using them to conduct “business as usual” during the various lockdowns experienced in the last year. A task made more challenging by the large variations in rural broadband speed and efficiency.

As far as I’m aware I have dealt with all the local issues raised with me by Parish Councils and local residents. The highways issues that have prevailed throughout the year are being dealt with by our County Councillor and I will do all I can to keep the momentum going.

The proposal to build 150 houses on land off School Road, Rayne was rejected by BDC and the subsequent Appeal was rejected by the Planning Inspector thanks to a great deal of work and effort by Rayne Parish Council, BDC Planning Staff and Legal representatives.

This wasn’t the year any of us was expecting and gave us all many challenges. Covid has dominated the year for all of us and has necessitated a different approach to most activities. All BDC meetings have been switched to virtual platforms and many working practices and locations have had to change quickly and seamlessly. Despite the considerable difficulties and restrictions imposed by Covid, the Council has achieved a great deal this year. Staff have been very adaptable and have administered all of the various Government Grants to eligible local businesses swiftly and securely, to help them survive the damage lockdowns have had on their incomes.

- So far since March 2020, BDC staff have issued £35 million in grants to more than 2,600 local businesses.
- Our Environmental Health and Street Scene Enforcement teams have worked all year (and are continuing to proactively work) with partners on COVID compliance and enforcement with our local businesses, in town centres and high streets and high footfall areas.
- BDC set up a virtual community hub in March 2020 and have dealt with 384 referrals from the Essex Welfare Service. In

addition, we have made welfare calls to more than 3,500 residents. (Figures correct as of 28/01/2021).

- Community Support - Our teams continue to work with Community 360 and voluntary sector partners to help vulnerable people who are shielding or need support. This includes our Community Transport Service, who are supporting our Community Transport customers to access vaccinations where they have no alternative arrangements.

Despite Covid we have still managed to press ahead with our major projects, including the pedestrianisation of Braintree High Street, Victoria Square development scheme, i-Construct project on Springwood Drive plus the Horizon 120 business park at Gt Notley. This new park will generate around 2000 jobs and already two major companies have signed contracts to move to the site, with a third company at the contract stage at the time of writing. Horizon 120 incorporates the first Solar powered Service Area for electric vehicles which is already open and offers high-speed electric vehicle charging points and the usual service area facilities. All of these projects will deliver improved facilities and /or jobs for local residents.

It has been another successful year for new affordable housing. Up to February 2021, 192 new affordable homes have been added to the local stock with up to another 30 expected by the end of the financial year.

The amended Section 1 of the Local Plan has been unanimously approved and Section 2 has been submitted for examination. Hopefully, this will be progressed smoothly and we will have an approved Local Plan in place by year end.

I have used The Councillor Community Grant for 2020/21 to support a number of small community projects in and near our Ward. I have also

been able to attract additional grant funds for two ward-based projects by pooling resources with some other District Councillors. The projects that I have been able to support are as follows.

£500 Rayne Village Hall towards supplies and equipment to comply with Covid guidance. Additional Grant also received from our County Councillor.

£300 The Salings Parish Council towards the cost of beautifying the village. Additional Grant also received from our County Councillor.

£200 Braintree District Mencap Society towards the cost of replacement doors and access system. Joint funding with other District Councillors delivered enough to complete the installation.

£200 Braintree Lions Club to renovate the fund-raising Santa float. The President of Braintree Lions lives in our Ward. Contributions from several other District Councillors brought the total to £800 and enabled the work to be completed in time for fund raising at Christmas.

£130 Friends of the Flitch Way for Carriage painting and additional planting. Joint funding with other District Councillors raised £1000 for this project.

£170 Braintree and Bocking Community Association. Joint funding with other District Councillors enabled the purchase and installation of IT equipment.

The Coronavirus pandemic is continuing to be challenging for all communities, and we are no exception. Our offices remain closed to the public with as many staff as possible working from home. However, all services are still operating as usual and Officers can be contacted by the Customer Service telephone number. At the time of writing the sacrifices being made by everyone are bringing the virus back under control with infection rates, hospitalisations, positive tests and deaths

all falling but we must maintain our efforts as there is still a long way to go. Hopefully, we will gradually return to close to normal during 2021.

Finally, I would like to end as I did last year by thanking the extraordinary efforts of both Parish Councils who have set up and maintained a network of volunteers throughout our Ward to support our residents through this Pandemic, whilst maintaining the normal work of the Parishes in unprecedented circumstances. I would also like to thank the volunteers themselves for being there when they are needed.