



SANDON TOPICS



Autumn 2011 Newsletter from Sandon Parish Council

Website: www.sandon.info

Please read before throwing away as this affects you

We would like to give a very warm welcome all new residents who have recently moved into our Parish

WINTER SALT BAG SCHEME

Essex County Council has invited town and parish councils across Essex to participate in the 2011/12 winter salt bag scheme which supports local communities to help themselves during periods of heavy snow. They will be offering, free of charge, one tonne of rock salt to each town and parish council which will be delivered by the end of October and stored in our own salt bins which the parish council is currently purchasing. The salt will come as a one tonne delivery packaged in 20kg sealed bags for ease of storage and distribution. The salt is for use by the community on the local highway.

We will need to

- Identify the priority areas of most concern to our local community (footpaths, access routes to bus stops etc)
- Seek volunteers in and around these areas
- Confirm that the volunteers are confident they are physically able to manually remove snow and then spread a thin layer of salt
- A method to keep a record of this information and share it with volunteers

Please remember that priority areas must be part of the public highway network. The salt provided as part of this scheme will be for use on the highway only and not for any other areas such as private driveways. Deliveries will be completed by the end of October.

SANDON QUARRY

Those parishioners who have lived in Sandon for many years are aware of the constant threat regarding the Quarry. A liaison committee has been set up with representatives from Bretts, members of the Parish Council, residents, Borough and County Councillors and Essex County Council planning officers, regarding the long overdue restoration of the void. We are under no illusion that a new planning application for commercial use will be forthcoming to achieve the restoration and we have retained the services of David Whipps, Solicitor to advise us. As always we will keep parishioners informed as to the progress of this and a public meeting of residents will be called if the need arises.

HIGHWAYS

Your Parish Council, despite chasing matters on a regular basis some of which have been outstanding for nearly 2 years, had become even more frustrated at any lack of response from Essex County Council Highways. With this in mind we emailed the new Leader, Councillor Peter Martin and an extract from his response is set out below:

“Thank you for your email dated 14th July regarding the unsatisfactory customer service you have received when contacting our Highways Service and also for your disappointment that the service offered by the Highways Department was not up to your expectation.

As you will be aware the County Council has committed to undertake a review in accordance with Department for Transport guidelines Circular 1/2006 of all speed limits on the County Priority route 1 and 2 network (main distribution routes). The review will look into speed surveys undertaken on all of the Priority 1 and 2 routes and the local environment features recorded in order to ascertain if a change in the current speed limit is required. The review is a requirement on all Highway Authorities set by Central Government. To effectively manage the introduction of any new speed limits, a phased approach has been agreed.

First Phase: Village limits identified in the review for a possible speed reduction in line with 1/2006 and the Essex Speed Management Strategy.

Second Phase: Lengths not within a village envelope identified in the review for a reduction in speed limit.

Third Phase: Requests from the Local Highway Panel and other Councillors, Parishes etc will be considered for limits not identified in the review.

Final Element: Those lengths of road where a speed increase has been suggested Phase one and two are currently being processed. There are a significant number and so an exact timeframe cannot be given although completing the review is a priority.

The proposed 30mph extension from Mayes Lane to the village sign at Gablefields will be reviewed under phase three: therefore we are currently unable to give a definite timescale as to when these changes will be implemented.

Mayes Lane/ Hulls Lane/ Woodhill Road Junction: Essex County Council is currently reviewing the appropriateness of vehicle activated signs and thus a decision on the funding for such proposals is currently on hold. Nevertheless, the funding contribution has been received by the Council, for which the deadline for spend is 2017.

Speed Limit Sign, Brick Kiln Road, Sandon: As you know repairs were made and vegetation cleared around the village sign on one side. Engineers are currently considering the replacement of the missing 30mph sign against other similar cases. It is unfortunately, not an immediate priority at this time.

Verge outside Sandon School, Car Parking, and Posts requested: Firstly with regard to the pram crossings: Chris Fox had previously compiled the necessary information to prepare the scheme. This is now being considered for funding, together with other similar proposals and a decision will be made by the end of December. Secondly with regard to the bollards that you refer to, this is not something that we will consider at this time. The reason being that there are currently double yellow road markings in place, which prohibit the parking of vehicles on the carriageway, footway and verge (i.e. from boundary to boundary), and thus, we have contacted the District Council and asked that they undertake enforcement in the new academic year and that they update both ourselves and Sandon Parish directly.

Verge along Old A130: The next verge cutting sequence for this area will commence in August.”

QUALITY STATUS

At the time of writing, we have just been advised that we have been awarded Quality Status again for another four years. This is a scheme which is designed to provide benchmark minimum standards for parish and town councils, and enable them to better represent the communities they serve. In order to achieve Quality Status, parish councils must demonstrate that they have reached the standard required by passing several tests including electoral mandate, qualifications of the Clerk, meetings, communications, Code of Conduct, Accounts and minimum standards of local democracy and citizenship. These requirements exceed the statutory duties of parish councils and we are very pleased to have been re-accredited with this status – reflecting the hard work and dedication of our Clerk and Councillors to their roles. There were 698 Quality Councils in the country of which only 286 have been re-accredited.

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

In the light of current concerns regarding breaches of planning control, the following is standing guidance for parish councils and members of the public in respect of any incursions onto land by travellers and the telephone numbers to contact. Where the land in question is owned by a local authority and mobile homes/caravans have been brought on, complaints should be referred to Essex County Council's Gypsy and Traveller Service (08457 430430). In the event that mobile homes/caravans are brought onto privately owned land without the express consent of the landowner, complaints should be referred to Essex Police (0300 333 4444). In either of the following incidences, where the land in question is owned by the person/s undertaking the actions, contact should be made with the Planning Enforcement Team (01245 606826 or email planning.enforcement@chelmsford.gov.uk) i.e. the bringing on to private land of a mobile home/caravan, or significant engineering works taking place to privately owned land without the consent of the landowner, this would include the creation of a hard surface.

SANDON PLAYING FIELDS

One of the concrete bollards at the car park to the playing fields was forcibly knocked out and an attempt made to do the same to another. A van with 2 male occupants was seen in the vicinity. In order to secure the field, whilst replacement bollards could be installed, Richard Speakman placed a trailer there to thwart any entrance to the field and we are extremely grateful to him. Please be vigilant at all times and report any suspicious activities to any one of your Parish Councillors.

SANDON VILLAGE FETE

Pat and Brian Nicholson, who have been the main organisers of the Village Fete, have decided to retire. If the event is to continue in the future, much needed help is required. The Parish Council offers support financially and the use of our Groundsman, but does not organise it. So if you can offer any help, or have any ideas or suggestions, please let us know. One idea received is to theme next year's fete on the Olympics. Our grateful thanks go to Pat & Brian for their valiant efforts over many years and, despite the intense heat, this year's fete raised much needed funds for many local community groups and the remaining proceeds and money raised from the Raffle given to their chosen charity.

RECYCLING

Chelmsford Borough Council has now begun doorstep recycling of liquid food and drink cartons such as Tetra Pak, as part of its kerbside recycling service giving residents the opportunity to recycle even more of their household waste. Every year, UK beverage carton manufacturers produce approximately 57,000 tonnes of cartons for milk and juices, and increasingly even chopped tomatoes and wine. That's possibly over 200 cartons each year from each household in Chelmsford that could be prevented from going to landfill. Residents can now simply place their cartons into their clear recycling bags for plastics, together with their other plastic recyclables.

SHARING AND LEARNING TOGETHER (SALT)

Salt recommenced on 13th September at St Andrew's Church, Sandon between 3.30 -5.30pm. Salt is an after school group held at St Andrew's Church primarily aimed at children aged 4 and over, although children of any age are welcome, along with their parent/carer/family/childminder etc. SALT stands for 'sharing and learning together' and involves creative activities, time to chill out, space to pray, learning about the Bible and an opportunity to make new friends whilst having fun. Something for everyone. The session usually ends with tea and toast around 5ish in case you thought hunger might catch up with your youngsters. There is no charge although a small donation towards running costs is always welcome. The new term of Tiny Tots has also recommenced and is at a new time of 1 - 2.30pm, again at St Andrews church. The new time is aimed to give mums/carers with children at school, time to come along and still leave plenty of time for the school pick up. Tiny Tots is for those aged 0 - 5 years old & they have a variety of toys for the little ones along with some arts and crafts for busy hands. A drink and a snack are provided and of course the kettle is always on for the adults. Any enquiries please call Alison on 474858 or e-mail tots@sandon-church.info or website www.sandon-church.info

ST ANDREWS CHURCH CHRISTMAS FAYRE

The Christmas Fayre is to be held on 26th November, 12 - 3pm at Sandon Village Hall. It's going to be rather special as Santa has been asked to attend for the afternoon! Hot dogs for lunch, as well as the usual refreshments, will be served. Along with Santa there will be a new/nearly new gift stall, lucky dip, teddy in a bag, nail painting, face painting, bottle tombola, and for sale cakes, delicious homemade produce, Christmas cards and wrap. Donations/Help: Donations for the above stalls would be most welcome, particularly new/nearly new gifts, homemade produce, cakes and bottles! If you are able to donate or would like to help in any way then please contact Alison Read on 474858 or Liz Bobeldijk on 471756. All proceeds will go to Church funds.

THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE WEEKEND 2nd – 4th JUNE 2012

The Parochial Church Council is hoping to organise a mini flower festival over that weekend to which all parishioners are welcome. More details to follow in the next newsletter.

BUMBLEBEE CHILDRENS CENTRE

The Bumblebee Children's Centre which is based in the Old School House, Main Road, Danbury, supports families with young children. The Centre is a Sure Start Children's Centre managed by 4Children the national children's charity all about children and families and they run a range of activities from messy play to baby massage.

Sure Start Children's Centres aim to improve outcomes for young children and their families working in partnership with Essex County Council and partner agencies such as local Health Visitors to offer information, advice and support for families with young children, covering areas such as, sleeping, soothing, infant development, managing children's behaviour and safety in the home.

They haven't seen many families from Sandon or surrounding villages so would really love to see you in Danbury or hear from you so they can be sure they are supporting all young families to have fun and enjoy those early years. They also have volunteering opportunities and would love to hear your views on how they run the centre and the activities provided. Call on 01245 224967 or pop in to find out more and about the activities they run, or how you could be involved, or phone Paula Burns Children's Centre Co-ordinator 07584 023537 email paula.burns@4children.org.uk or Lucy Berryman Support Worker 07795 174378 email lucy.berryman@4children.org.uk

If there is an article or an event which you would like published in the newsletter, or you have any comments, please contact the Editor, Councillor Dianne Neal @ dianne.neal@yahoo.co.uk or phone 01245 222330.

YOUR PARISH COUNCIL

The Council meets at 7.15p.m on the 2nd Monday of each Month at Sandon Village Hall and on alternate months at Howe Green Chapel. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

IAN WRIGHT – CHAIRMAN (BOROUGH COUNCILLOR)

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