

RAYLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2020

The Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, Bull Lane, Rayleigh SS6 8JD

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A GREAT CHRISTMAS SPECTACLE IN THE HIGH STREET

IT was wonderful to see the crowds of people at the Christmas lights switch on event.

The lovely singing from the school choirs, the Mushroom Theatre Company and local singer Joe Palmer really brought the community together to celebrate this very special time of year.

It was good to see Southend United Football Club players and to have BBC Essex presenter Steve Scruton and Ian Wyatt with us again, along with our very popular Town Crier Jim Shubb.

My thanks go to the volunteers who helped Councillors and staff to set up and marshal the event, particularly Concert Services who have diligently provided our PA system and stage lights for many years.

The Town Council tries to keep costs down by inviting sponsors to contribute and we are very grateful to all those who do so and especially to our main sponsors, Mark Worship from Marcos Bar, BTMK Todmans and Rayleigh and District Chamber of Trade.

We also sell our very popular town crest badges to the public to raise funds for the Christmas Lights and Rayleigh in Bloom.

BTMK Todmans arranged the colouring competition and awarded prizes to:

- Laura Whithelmy from Rayleigh Primary School - 5 years and under
- Eloisea Neville from Wyburns Primary School - 6 to 8 years
- Byron Jensen-Freeman from Down Hall Primary School - 9 to 11 years
- Zach Perry of Edward Francis Primary School drew a beautiful picture of 'Rayleigh at Christmas' and was the winner of our competition to design the Chairman's Christmas Card, which was sent to local organisations and dignitaries. Zach won 4 tickets, which were generously donated by the Cliffs Pavilion, for his family to go to last year's pantos.

The members of the Christmas Lights Committee judged the festive displays in our local shops and pubs during December and each received a hamper kindly donated for the second year by Palmers Solicitors. The winners were: Charity Shop - Sue Ryder, Commercial Shop - Lovely Home and Spread Eagle Public House. The Christmas Lights Switch on 2020 has been cancelled due to Covid-19, however the lights will still be put up as in previous years.

A PRIVILEGE TO SERVE

Report by the Chairman of Rayleigh Town Council
COUNCILLOR JUNE LUMLEY

IT has been an enormous privilege for me to serve as Chairman of Rayleigh Town Council during the last year. I thank my fellow Councillors for giving me this opportunity and particularly thank the Town Council staff and my Vice-Chairman, Councillor Robert Milne for their support during this busy, productive and challenging year.

I have represented the Town Council at a variety of meetings and functions, but unfortunately due to the Covid-19 virus, many of the recent activities and engagements such as, Great Easter Egg Hunt, School Council visits, Primary School Quiz, St George's Day, Rayleigh in Bloom Competitions, Trinity Fair and Christmas Lights Event which have been cancelled. While this was disappointing the health and safety of our residents is priority.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all key workers and members of our community who have volunteered to assist at this unprecedented time. I have always been impressed that the people I have met have shown their love and devotion for this Town in the way they work towards making Rayleigh a better and safer place for us all to live.

Some of the highlights of the year for me included:

- Rayleigh's Christmas Lights event in November 2019
- Receiving GOLD awards from the Anglia in Bloom judges for Rayleigh for the third consecutive year and for the King George V Playing Field, for the second year
- Rayleigh's Christmas Lights event in November 2019
- Presenting Town Council grant cheques to local organisations

As Chairman I was looking forward to presenting our Annual Awards in April 2020, again this had to be cancelled, I hope that all being well this event will return next year and we can award those members of our community in the various categories. I hope that over the coming months, providing we follow the guidelines, life will slowly begin to return to Rayleigh and we can all work together to a brighter future.



Coun Mrs June Lumley, Chairman visiting Rayleigh Windmill and meeting Mr Trevor Rand. The article they are holding shows Mr E Rand the first Urban District Chairman.

THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

THE Policy & Finance Committee has various responsibilities. These include the general governance of the Town Council such as finances, budgeting, grants, Standing Orders, and Financial Regulations. We also look after the general administration of the Council, including the maintenance of the Town Council's premises at the Pavilion, insurance, communications, office equipment, payroll, and the training of staff and councillors.

The work of the committee over the last year has included:

- Review of our Business Continuity Plan to ensure that the Town Council could recover its information following any loss of computers and premises.
- Adherence to General Data Protection Regulations
- Fire Risk Assessment of our premises
- Review of our Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

For the coming municipal year 2020-21 we have developed our budgets and have been able to set a precept which is very slightly reduced from the previous year. Council tax due to Rayleigh Town Council is the lowest of the fourteen parishes within the Rochford District.

The Town Council achieves good financial management by actively seeking sponsorship from local businesses for its floral displays, Christmas lights and Trinity Fair and by applying for grant funding for new projects wherever possible.

The coronavirus arrived and lockdown commenced after we had set the budgets but before the start of the municipal year. Obviously, the Trinity Fair has been cancelled and this will save us some money but the cancellation of the market and its resumption with far fewer stalls means that we lose income.

Overall, we will endeavour to work within the budgets and events to be held later in the year will be assessed in line with government guidelines.

We will, of course, continue to maintain all of our current services where possible. These include supporting the Rayleigh Town Museum, arranging the Remembrance Day Parade, floral displays, management of town centre street furniture, street markets, the Crown Hill Public Toilets, Lower Wyburns Woodland and four allotment sites and the maintenance of the King George V Playing Field. We have earmarked reserves for improvements in the High Street and for the Christmas Lighting scheme but these may not be implemented this year.

The Town Council has a budget of £15,000 for providing grants to local charities that provide a useful service for Rayleigh residents and have demonstrated that they are well run. Our Chairman has presented cheques to the following organisations: Carers Choices, Paint Box, SCAFT, Citizens Advice Bureau, 6th Castle Mount Guides, Rayleigh Lawn Tennis Club, Essex Air Ambulance, Wyvern Community Transport, Southend in Sight, Active Christian Trust, RRAYS, 2nd Castle Mount West Guides and Bar 'n' Bus.

The Town Council also awarded £100 to The FitzWimarc School and Sweeney Park School towards their Winter Warmer Campaigns. The next round of grant funding will take place in November 2020 and the budget will remain the same.

The Town Council strives to achieve 'best value' for all its expenditure and one of its responsibilities is to ensure that we abide by our financial regulations so that we get good value for money and obtain the most competitive price for any work, goods or materials that are purchased by the Council. We always try to employ local businesses and we obtain at least three quotations for any expenditure over £500 and conduct tendering exercises for higher cost projects.

Remembrance Day

REMEMBRANCE Day is a major Civic Event for Rayleigh Town Council and we hold regular meetings with the Royal British Legion Branch and Club, Holy Trinity Church and other interested parties to ensure that our town is able to pay its respects on this very important day.

The Town Council works closely with each organisation and funds the traffic management for the rolling road block to allow the parade to march safely through the town centre. Arrangements for the service in November 2020 are in place and will be re-assessed depending on the situation later in the year. Information will be circulated in due course.

If you would like further information on any of these subjects or if you would like to become one of our sponsors please contact the Town Council office, Policy and Finance Committee

Rayleigh Markets

RAYLEIGH's Wednesday market continued to take place in the High Street every week. The stalls sell a huge variety of goods and we keep one pitch aside for a charity each week. We regularly hold markets on Saturdays leading up to Christmas in November and December.

The market had to close following the announcement by Government in March. It is hoped that we can slowly re-introduce stalls over the coming months providing the social distancing guidelines are adhered to.

Lower Wyburns Woods

THE Town Council has a long term lease from the Woodland Trust to manage this 8 acre site on Daws Heath Road, which is adjacent to our allotment site.

Our 'Friends of Lower Wyburns' group has been set up for local residents to become involved in improving the Woodland. Our previous Chairman Councillor Jack Lawmon planted trees that were donated from the Woodland Trust for the 'Queens Commonwealth Canopy' and a plaque has been installed to mark this occasion.

Homelessness

THE Town Council is concerned about the increase in the number of 'beggars' who sit in shop doorways and are aware that not all are genuinely homeless.

We work in partnership with Church groups, the police and Rochford District Council to ensure that those who really do need help are put in touch with the appropriate charities and organisations, and the 'professional beggars' are moved on by the police.

Primary Schools Quiz

THE Town Council had hosted one semi-final of the Year 6 General Knowledge Quiz before the lockdown was imposed and therefore it was not able to continue.

The Town Council thanks Holy Trinity Church who were due to host the final, Chamber of Trade who were going to provide sponsorship and Cllr Bruce Smart who had prepared the rounds for each semi-final and final.

All being well the quiz will be held in 2021.

Town Centre charity work

We continue to have a Street Management Plan with the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association to control the activities of Charity Fund Raisers in the town centre and we continue to liaise closely with the 'Big Issue' to ensure compliance with our regulations.

Allotments

THE Town Council has 130 allotment plots at four sites around the town and there are waiting lists at most of the sites.

If you are interested in having an allotment please contact the Town Council office.

Easter Egg Hunt

THE Town Council could not proceed with the Great Easter Egg Hunt this year due to the Covid-19 Virus but it will return in 2021.

Public Footpaths

THE Town Council continues to report defects to Essex Highways and is consulted on proposed changes to the highways.

TOWN AWARDED ANGLIA IN BLOOM GOLD FOR THIRD TIME

IT was wonderful for the town to be awarded GOLD for the third time by the Anglia in Bloom judges, following many years of hard work by our dedicated team.

The town centre floral displays were magnificent again last summer and I thank our many loyal sponsors who are local residents, schools, charities and businesses.

The Anglia in Bloom judges do not only judge the flowers but also make us on the general appearance of our town and the involvement of the community in activities such as holding events, competitions and litter picks etc.

I am also very pleased to report that the King George V Playing Field received its second GOLD award this year and the Lower Wyburns Woods were awarded Silver Gilt.

The winners of all of our Rayleigh in Bloom competitions 2019 are shown below and were presented with their awards at our own Presentation Evening at Rayleigh Baptist Church in the Autumn.

CREATE A PICTURE WITH A RECYCLED MATERIALS TO PORTRAY A NATURE

Rayleigh Primary School, Key Stage 1
Rayleigh Primary School, Key Stage 2

SCHOOL GARDEN

1st Place - St Nicholas C of E Primary School

SENIOR SCHOOL PROJECT

FitzWimarc School - Iconic Rayleigh

BEST PUBLIC HOUSE

1st Place - The Spread Eagle

BEST MAINTAINED RELIGIOUS GROUNDS

1st Place - Rayleigh Baptist Church

FRONT GARDEN

1st Place - Mrs Eileen Dicker

BACK GARDEN

1st Place - Mrs Vivienne Williams

SHARED GARDEN

1st Place - Raworth Court

ALLOTMENTS COMPETITION

Lower Wyburns - Mr P Heale

Kenilworth Gardens - Mr M Rivers

Grove Road - Mr Mrs C James

Sweeney Park - Mr M Culling

Overall Winner - Mr P Heale

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Street Furniture

THE programme for repainting all of the street furniture in the town centre including bollards, street lights, pillar clock, Grade II listed telephone box and benches has been completed.

The Town Sign outside the Rayleigh Town Museum has been repainted by a signwriter. We continue to liaise with Essex County Council about the condition of the railings in the town centre, which keep being damaged by large vehicles.

The Town Council owns eight bus shelters around the town and a representative from the Town Council attends regular Parish Transport meetings, which are arranged by Essex County Council to inform and consult the local community.

The Town Council displays community information in our bus shelter notice boards. A new bench has been installed on London Hill.

Rayleigh's Heritage

THE Town Council cherishes Rayleigh's heritage and we are very fortunate to have residents such as Mr Ernie Lane, who has written several books on Rayleigh, and Mr Mike Davies, Chairman of Rayleigh Through the Looking Glass and Rayleigh Town Museum.

The Town Council continues to support the Museum by paying the annual rent at 91 High Street. The Museum has proved to be very popular and the many volunteers should be commended for their work on the variety of exhibitions and slide shows.

Our Town & Heritage Guide, which is distributed widely from London Liverpool Street Railway Station to Southend Tourism centre, as well as locally, will be updated to include the new heritage plaque, which has been installed at the entrance to the King George V Playing Field, making a total of 32 heritage plaques in our town.

Community Speedwatch

ARE you concerned about speeding in your road? If so you can help to make local roads safer by volunteering to assist the Town Council in Community Speed Watch.

Training is essential, and if you are interested in being involved please contact us. The objective of the scheme is to raise awareness of the dangers of speeding and anti-social behaviour on the roads.

Where appropriate the driver or registered keeper of offending vehicles will be sent a letter advising them of the dangers of speeding.

The Town Council has purchased its own Speed Watch equipment to allow us to conduct these checks, however, we do need more.

Trinity Fair

THE Trinity Fair ran from 1227 to 1899 and was revived by the Town Council in 2017. This very popular event was held again in 2018 and will be held in June each year.

This event was very successful and brought the whole community together to celebrate all that is good about our town.

My thanks go to Steven and Emma Cooper of Haddon Events for bringing all the stalls and entertainment and to the many local organisations who participated, including Holy Trinity Church, Rayleigh Town Museum, Dutch Cottage, Windmill Volunteers and Rayleigh Mount.

It was with great sadness that this popular event scheduled for Sunday 7th June had to be cancelled. The Town Council will be working with Haddon Events to hopefully return with this event, bigger and better in 2021.

Crown Hill Public Toilets

WE have now taken on a 10 year management lease with Rochford District Council, who owns the Crown Hill Public Toilets, in order to continue to provide toilet facilities for the public in the town centre.

We understand from Rochford District Council that the existing public toilets building will be refurbished and available for rent by a commercial business. The Town Council fitted a defibrillator to the outside of the new toilets and this is available for all to use in an emergency.

Crown Hill Public Toilets

MR Mike Davies continues to do an excellent job as our Public Footpaths representative and is constantly working to improve the pathways and to solve the numerous and varied problems that come his way.

ANOTHER GOOD YEAR FOR THE KING GEORGE V PLAYING FIELD

DEALING WITH A VARIETY OF ISSUES

THE Environment Committee deals with a variety of subjects and most of its responsibilities are within the town centre, such as Christmas Lights, Trinity Fair, Markets, Floral Displays, Crown Hill Public Toilets and Street Furniture.

The Committee also manages four allotment sites in the town and Lower Wyburns Woodland on Daws Heath Road. Our Sub-Committees hold regular meetings and are served by

members of the public as well as Town Councillors. The Town Council is consulted throughout the year on many issues by other local organisations and our members are appointed as representatives of the Town Council to attend meetings of the Chamber of Trade, Dutch Cottage Management Group, Finchfield Trustees, Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils, Rayleigh Town Museum, Rayleigh Mount, Rochford District Council and Essex County Council.

we will be listening to their ideas for improvements to make this an even more enjoyable place to visit.

The central location of the playing field makes it a very popular venue for events.

Income is generated for the Trust from these bookings and from various other sources including the hire of the Pavilion by organisations for meetings. Rayleigh Town Council's rental of office accommodation on the first floor, the Snack Bar, Rayleigh Bowls Club's lease for use of the Pavilion and bowling green and local youth and adult football teams.

All income received is used to help towards the costs of maintenance and improvement of the play-

ing field and facilities. We also receive rental income from the Rayleigh Lions fireworks display.

The Lions are very much in need of new members to help them to continue their good work and if you would like to become a 'Lion' please contact rayleighlionsclub@goolemail.com. We also welcomed back the 'Moonbeams Outdoor Silent Cinema' in the spring for a performance of being 'Mamma Mia Here We Go Again'.

The Skate Park and Teen Shelter continue to be very popular for young people and the majority treat all of the facilities in the playing field with respect.

However, following reports of anti-social behav-

iour, an increase in vandalism and reports of drug taking in the teen shelter, the Town Council has liaised closely with Essex Police. It is the Town Council's policy to pursue all offenders through the civil and criminal courts as necessary to help offset the cost of vandalism, which has to be paid for by Rayleigh taxpayers.

The Town Council also continues to employ the services of Essex County Council's Youth Workers to attend the Skate Park every Wednesday evening to discuss these and other issues with the young people.

Their work has been very effective and has helped and educated some very vulnerable individuals. Bar 'n' Bus also attend the field throughout the year to in-

teract with youth activities such as cage football. Football training and matches have continued very successfully this season but was affected by a very wet winter and then the cancellation of all sport due to the Covid-19 virus.

The Town Council will work in co-operation with clubs following guidance from the Government and Football Association regarding the introduction of football at a grassroots level.

Rayleigh Bowls Club celebrated its 60th anniversary last year and part of the celebrations was a visit from the Chelsea Pensioners on 19th June. The Club is situated within the playing field and rents part of the ground floor of the Pavilion as its base. The club had to

close due to the Covid-19 virus and is taking gradual steps to re-open on a limited capacity. Please contact the club directly regarding joining or further information.

Mark Bryant's Snack Bar on the ground floor of the Pavilion continues to be very popular for his variety of ice creams and snacks. Mark is open at weekends in the winter and every day throughout the summer.

The Snack Bar houses a defibrillator that was donated by Rayleigh Football Club for easy access in emergencies.

The Snack bar has just reopened to the public at the beginning of June and will operate social distancing measures in order to serve visitors to the playing field.

TOWN'S PLANNING & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

THE Town Council is a statutory consultee for all planning applications submitted to the District Council by householders, businesses and organisations such as Councils and schools. Members of the public may view planning applications on line on Rochford District Council's website at www.rochford.gov.uk.

The work of our Planning & Highways Committee was reviewed in 2018 and we decided that, due to the high number of applications for minor changes to properties, we would concentrate only on the planning applications that meet a set criteria and these include the Conservation Area in the town centre, Listed Buildings, Large Housing Developments, Green Belt Land and Changes of Use of Premises.

Town Council members may continue to ask for any applications to be considered by our Planning Committee, however, we have found that this is not often necessary and the new criteria has resulted in far fewer applications being considered, but with more time being able to be given to the more significant applications.

My colleagues and I attend Development Control meetings at the Civic Suite to give the Town Council's views on applications, in order to assist District Councillors in reaching their decisions.

It is very important for local peoples' views to be represented in a fair and consistent manner. An in-depth knowledge of the local area is extremely helpful when examining planning applications and

formulating a response to the District Council. The Town Council's Planning & Highways Committee meets every three weeks in order to respond to the District Council within the consultation period for

planning applications. The Planning & Highways Committee continue to assess Rayleigh planning applications during the Covid-19 Virus.

The weekly parish list provided by Rochford District Council are added to the Town Council website every Friday.

It is residents wish to raise comments or objection to an application they should contact Rochford District Council directly.

RAYLEIGH TOWN COUNCILLORS					
COUNCILLOR	TEL NO.	COMMITTEE	COUNCILLOR	TEL NO.	COMMITTEE
Trinity Ward			Wheatley Ward		
Roger Donell	07722 683749	Environment/Planning & Highways/ KGV Playing Field	Jamie Barton	07540 320746	Environment/Planning & Highways/KGV Playing Field
Deborah Mercer	741019	Planning/Environment/Policy & Finance	Christine Callis	770591	KGV Playing Field/Planning & Highways
Cleryl Roe	777939	Environment	Edmund Dray	775947	Planning & Highways/KGV Playing Field
David Sperring	774181	KGV Playing Field	Robin Dray	742842	Environment Policy & Finance
Keith Podd		KGV Playing Field/Market	Jack Lawson	01702 527795	Environment/Planning & Highways
Grange Ward			Lodge Ward		
Chris Lumley	784143		Robert Milne Vice Chairman	(01702) 529883	All Committees
June Lumley Chairman	784147	All Committees	Julie Sawford	655603	Environment/KGV Playing Field
Carol Pavlin	780415	Policy & Finance/Planning & Highways	Terry Wallis	778138	Policy & Finance
Margaret Spencer	785471	KGV Playing Field/Environment	Ian Ward	770895	Environment/Policy & Finance
Whitehouse Ward			Sweyne Park Ward		
Richard Shorter	776356	Policy & Finance	Ron Oatham	785295	Planning & Highways
			Bruce Smart	780184	Environment/Policy & Finance
James Newport	07494 236807	Policy & Finance	Chris Stanley	785732	KGV Playing Field
				Rayleigh Town Council Office	741880