

SALCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL NEWSLETTER - Winter 2008/2009

REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

We are of course all now waiting to hear how Hazel Blears intends to change local government in Devon. So far we have only been asked which sort of unitary local government we would prefer. Speaking personally I am concerned that, Cornwall seems to be making a costly shambles of introducing unitary government across the Tamar, and I worry that things will not be managed any better here in Devon. Eventually you will have the chance not only to comment on her proposals but also to say whether or not you prefer the status quo. Please use this opportunity, because it could have a huge impact on our quality of life here in Salcombe and the rest of Devon for years to come.

Finally, please forgive me if I revert to my old hobby-horse – the need to conserve and protect the character of Salcombe. Jennifer Nixon as a conservation officer at District was tasked with the job of examining our conservation areas and their surroundings to determine their “distinctive characteristics” – in other words, those characteristics which most need preserving from inappropriate and insensitive development. This information will then form the basis for a conservation plan for the town. You should all have either received or picked up from outlets a leaflet asking for your views and we now await the draft document. A consultation will then take place and if we don't care enough about Salcombe to help and take part in this task, then we will only have ourselves to blame in the future if officers decide that we don't care what happens, to the town as a whole and the conservation area in particular. Let's make the most of this opportunity to make our views known to South Hams District Council.

Cllr Paul Coulson

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES

Planning

The planning working party continue to implement their agreed strategy, that of visiting every site and checking proposals against planning regulations together with our local community list which was published in the last newsletter. New legislation came into force on Oct 1 2008 which has a much broader (and less restrictive on the applicant) definition of permitted development. As we are in an AONB we still have some defences against some aspects of this new permitted development but we are currently studying the effects of this legislation in other areas so we can give our future decisions with confidence and protect the well-being of the community.

Cllr Roger H Moore

Property & Open Spaces

At a working party meeting at Cliff House on 26th October 2008 Cllr Mrs Tabiner stood down as Chair and Cllr Clark was handed the reins.

'As a Working Party we may have appeared like a swan; on the surface not seeming to be doing much but under the surface working away like crazy! We will be scheduling another meeting soon at which we will be collating all of the research work we have been carrying out with a view to setting objectives and targets'.

Cllr Roger Clark

Policy & Staffing

The Policy and Staffing Working Party has been very busy since they were formed last May. At present members are considering a joint Housing Survey with other partners, also bringing into this the analysis from the District Council together with compiling a list of possible projects to be funded by Section 106 grants and we are actively working on the requirements to obtain Quality Council Status to utilise new powers being given to Town Councils.

Cllr Mrs Tina Roberto
Finance

The Finance Group convened on a number of occasions in order to finalise the Council Budget for 2009/2010 fiscal year. We are well aware of the pressures facing people at this time and felt it important that Town Council do not add to them. The budget was therefore set at the same level (per household) as the 2007/2008 budget but there will be no reduction in either Council Grants to town organisations or in Cemetery Maintenance two important areas. There are many cases where it will be an extremely challenging year but with your help, common sense and barring double-digit inflation it will be achievable.

One point that is well worth mentioning is how impressed I am with the commitment of my fellow councillors; everyone of them in the overall picture actually pays in order to serve you. They receive no financial compensation but are of course entitled to expenses.

The Budget 2009/2010 was passed by full Council at the November 26th meeting and is available to view in the Clerks' office.

Cllr Roger H. Moore

Litter News

During the course of last year it was noticeable that we had a number of litter issues in the Town which needed to be addressed. The first was the general litter problem; the litter bins on Whitestrand were unsuitable for the amount of rubbish and needed seagull protection. South Hams installed their new model seagull proof bin which also has increased capacity. As the majority of rubbish is connected to the night-life we also instigated a 7:15 am clean up and collection at Whitestrand. Furthermore following discussion District agreed to re-position some of the litter bins and this has now been carried out with assurances from South Hams that they will be emptied 3 to 4 times a day in the Summer months.

Another litter problem which has been increasing over the last few years is the holiday-home rubbish that is attacked by seagulls whilst awaiting collection by private contractors. This litter is most unsightly and unhealthy although it is acknowledged that the private contractors clean up very well when they arrive it can be visible most of the day and also tends to be in the town centre. We are negotiating with South Hams District

Council to get free seagull bags issued to the residents home owners that cannot accommodate wheely bins, but regardless of the outcome the rubbish is the responsibility of the property owner and the Town Council have agreed that together with South Hams they will take action against those who habitually offend.

All it will take is investment by holiday homes of £5.50 to buy a seagull proof bag that will protect and contain the litter until collection and life will be easier for our town sweepers as well as more enjoyable for our residents and visitors.

Housing for local people.

All will be aware of the discussions that are currently ongoing with regard to the need for housing across the whole of England. Government has set figures for the amount of housing it wishes to see built and by when and local Planning Departments are working on documents to deliver these wishes.

There have also been articles in the local newspaper requesting landowners to come forward with suitable land for consideration through a joint South Hams and Teignbridge independent analysis of the options offered by landowners, position and suitability of these proposals. This work continues on this document by District but meanwhile there are those that wish to provide local housing sooner to meet local need now.

With planning proposals coming forward Salcombe Town Council want to have a clear picture of what Salcombe people need rather than relying on figures from national and regional level and have thus discussed the need to support a Housing Needs Survey being carried out again.

A Housing Needs survey was carried out in 2003/04 along with the Town Plan but many residents may not at that time have realised the importance of everyone responding to this survey and not understood that the information provided is totally confidential and not even collated in South Hams and thus providing further assurance of financial anonymity. Some may not feel comfortable with providing income etc but the report needs this and provides an overall picture not personal details and such financial details are required to ascertain what type of housing is required and can be afforded.

It is important for everyone in and related to Salcombe who is in need of housing now, or will be in the next few years to indicate their need for affordable housing or rented accommodation and this includes young people 17 rising to 18 years, families and older people wishing to sell their homes to release their capital (i.e. young people at University can fill the form in if they will have a need when they return and even those who are out of the area but would like to return to the area and family, along with older people on the housing ladder who need to downsize and use the money from their sale to live on). If local people do not make Town Council aware of their wishes local housing will not get built as needed. Also if people young and old do not fill in the Housing Register and Home to Own forms then they will not show up on the lists and thus others from away will be invited to fill their places.

Salcombe Town Council understand that stories of people being brought in from other areas to fill housing can lead to frustration and residents feeling that they will never get a foot on the housing ladder or move into their own 'part owned' house or perhaps get rented accommodation. However without local people actively stating their housing needs and working with Town Council to ensure that those who need housing have completed the forms and are on the lists there is the danger that if local people are not registered Housing Associations will have to bring people from outside in to fill and pay for such housing.

Salcombe Town Council is taking a pro active role by holding a stock of Housing forms at their offices in Cliff House which they will hand or send out to anyone who requests them. Salcombe Town Council is also committed to working with any landowner and Housing Association who are willing to pay for a further independent survey to illustrate local need. We ask that you please take time and fill in any survey together with housing forms. Any assistance needed with Housing Forms will be willing given by the Clerk or councillors.

COUNCIL EVENTS

Last autumn three Salcombe Town Councillors were privileged to attend a presentation at Devon County Council when, as part of Democracy Week, there was an award ceremony for Councillors who make a difference in their area. Councillor Mrs Jean Furness had been nominated with massive local support for her dedication to Salcombe and Councillor Roger Moore and I accompanied her to the prize giving. There were nine finalists in her group. The adjudicators paid tribute to the extremely high standard of work carried out by all the entrants and had great difficulty in choosing a winner and runner up. Although Jean did not win she felt very proud to have been considered and was honoured at the compliments she received together with a handsome diploma. We enjoyed a buffet supper and chatted to entrants in other sections, Devon Association of Parish Council Officers and County Councillors before driving home after a very pleasant experience.

Cllr Mrs Ann Thompson

Councillors and their Contact Details		
Cllr Paul Coulson	coulson@coulson.entadsl.com	01548 842867
Cllr Roger Moore	rogerhmoore@gmail.com	01548 842006
Cllr Roger Clark	roger@clarkcarsofsalcombe.co.uk	01548 842914
Cllr Lewis Dilling		01548 842921
Cllr Mrs Jean Furness	regattajeans@supanet.com	01548 843799
Cllr Mrs Jackie Lidstone		01548 844526
Cllr Mark Long	marklong.connect@btinternet.com	01548 843828
Cllr Mrs Tina Roberto	tina_roberto@hotmail.com	01548 842897
Cllr David Stevens	davidsalcombe@aol.com	01548 843156
Cllr Mrs Gaynor Tabiner	gaynortabiner@hotmail.com	01548 843102

Cllr Mrs Ann Thompson	ann@thompson5902.freeseve.co.uk	01548 843946
Mrs Gill Claydon (Clerk)	gillclaydon@salcombetowncouncil.gov.uk	01548 842282

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

Councillor Surgeries & Meetings

COUNCIL SURGERIES are held from 6.00pm to 8.00pm at Salcombe Primary School on the first Tuesday of each month. This is an opportunity for you as a member of the public, to come and talk informally to a Councillor about any matters, relating to Salcombe, that might be concerning you, such as a planning application, car-parking, or refuse collection or any other topic you wish. Whatever the problem, please do come along and those present will do their best to help you or ensure that they point you in the right direction or get an answer to you later.

COUNCIL MEETINGS take place on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month, commencing at 6.30pm, in Cliff House Library. Please note that in August and December there is only one meeting. At the beginning of each meeting Town Council have an Open Forum where members of the public are invited to speak about any item relating to Salcombe or something that is on the Agenda. Your opinions and ideas are important to help us serve your wishes and without them we cannot know what your views are. So please come along and let us hear your questions or views on any topic which concerns you or which you think will benefit Salcombe.

The Clerk to Salcombe Town Council, Mrs Gill Claydon, will be in the Council Office to deal with any queries, concerns or requests/reports (behind the Library) at Cliff House each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, from 10.00am to 12 noon, (unless attending local site meetings elsewhere). She will be able to let you see Planning Applications and will deal with any administrative problems or questions you may have or put you in touch with someone who can help you.

Should she not be available or you are unable to get to the office in person, Gill can be contacted on:

Telephone: 01548 842282 (please do leave a message and a response will be made as soon as possible).

Email: gillclaydon@salcombetowncouncil.gov.uk

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

If, for any reason you aren't able to contact a Councillor or the Clerk, you may find the following contact details useful in dealing with urgent queries:

District Councillors: Cllr John Carter Cllr Paul Coulson	01548 560086 01548 842867
County Councillor: Sir Simon Day	01752 691212
South Hams District Council	01803 861234
S.H.D.C. Emergency Out of Hours	01803 867034
Kingsbridge Depot	01548 522010
Recycling Helpline	01803 861199
South West Water (24 hours)	0800 169 1144

S.W.W. Environment Officer	01392 446688
Salcombe Harbour Office	01548 843791
Devon County Council	0845 155 1015
D.C.C. Roads & Transport	0845 155 1004
Police (24 hours)	08452 777444
Police Community Support Officer	08456 567890
Salcombe Tourist Information Centre	01548 843927

If a street light is not working or you wish to report a pothole, please phone 0845 155 1004