

## GREAT BURSTEAD AND SOUTH GREEN VILLAGE COUNCIL

### CLLR MARIE DEAR - CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024

Great Burstead and South Green Village Council is the first tier of local government, representing 8,000 residents and 2,700 households. During the past year it has continued to work on residents' behalf to improve our Village.

**Elections** - Local elections took place this May. We have eight seats on the Village Council. Six Village Councillors were nominated to stand resulting in an uncontested election. We currently have two vacancies and one co-option application in the pipeline.

**Local Community Tax – The Precept:** Prudent management of our finances has ensured that the local tax residents pay to the Village Council - known as the precept – has not increased again this year.

**Planning Applications:** The Village Council considers and is a consultee regarding all planning applications in our Parish. The Local Plan was withdrawn by Basildon Borough Council and a new Local Plan is being formulated for submission to the Planning Inspectorate in 2028. Due to the withdrawal of the Local Plan developers made four major planning applications in our parish. Three were passed by Basildon Council and one went to the Planning Inspectorate where it was passed on appeal. The Village Council strongly objected to these developments as they were on green belt and provided little additional infrastructure. This will mean approximately 400 extra homes in our parish and one seventy bed care home.

**Christmas Lights:** We continue to provide the pretty lights that adorned the green with the same design as last year. Lights also sparkled in the trees around the Village Sign in Church Street Great Burstead.

**Christmas Community Contributions** - The Village Council made Christmas donations to Southwood Court, Allington Court Residents Association, Friends of St Peters Association, South Green Infants School PTA and South Green Junior School PTA. A donation of food worth £100 was also made to Billericay Food Bank.

**Fun Day on the Green:** The Fun Day was a great success with hundreds of residents attending and enjoying a family day out on the green. The entertainment stalls, bouncy castles, and other attractions were provided and organised by the Village Council free for residents. We have had much positive feedback from residents. Local retailers gave generously for the raffle run in aid of St Luke's Hospice. The event raised funds for St Luke's Hospice.

**Defibrillator** - With the help of a grant we have obtained a defibrillator for installation around the area of the shops at South Green. We are investigating possible sites and plan the defibrillator is installed by the year end.

**Great Burstead Village Sign** - To ensure the maintenance of the Village Sign in Church Street it was cleaned.

**Wooden Bollards Around the Green** - Several were replaced as they had been damaged by inconsiderate parking. In addition reflective strips were attached to all bollards.

**Passingham Park Improvements** - Last year we replaced the broken bench in the park and we are continuing with improvements by installing moveable goal posts in the park. This ensures that the area around the goals does not degrade as the posts can be moved to new spots to protect the grass.

**New Bin:** We have funded a new compactible bin outside Tesco Express. This bin was the most heavily used at South Green and was often overflowing. Compactible bins have a built in press that compacts litter so much more litter can be accommodated. The bin is solar powered saving on energy and keeping our parade of shops tidier.

**Planting:** We continue to arrange planting under the notice board on the green and planting at the bell bollards and around the Village sign in Great Burstead.

**South Green Shops Improvements:** Investigations installing bollards around the lay-by outside Tesco Express and outside the GP surgery to stop inconsiderate and dangerous parking on the pavement are ongoing.

**Communicating with Residents through our Media:** We continue to communicate through our website, Instagram, twitter accounts and are in the process of setting up a Facebook account. The first Village Voice after the pandemic was delivered to all households in the parish last September.

Lastly we thank our Village Clerk, Mrs Mel Linwood, for her work on behalf of residents. Thanks are also due to our Village Councillors: A Boyce, L Cowles, S Crowe, R Jackson and L Thomas who are committed to working voluntarily for residents and organising events for the community.