

## **Brixton Parish Council - Annual Report for 2013-14**

2013-2014 has been another year of progress, change and challenge for Brixton Parish Council.

Change is really on the agenda for Brixton ... work on the Sherford New Town has started and the Parish Council is linked into the Sherford New Town Project Team with particular emphasis on planning, the setting up of a new Town Council and a Trust to manage the country park - open space and green area which provides both a buffer from the new town and a link to the village of Brixton. Building work has started at Canes Orchard. The Parish Council and residents have been consulted by David Wilson Homes in the pre app stage of phase 2 for a further 17 houses. The Parish Council will be looking at how the Section 106 monies in relation to recreation can be effectively used in the Parish.

In February this year the Parish Council received a planning application for the restoration of Steer Point Quarry with inert waste. This was followed by an exhibition and consultation by the applicants, Aardvark. Brixton Parish Council at its Parish Council meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April, which was attended by 115 residents, lodged an objection to this application, then set up Steer Point Quarry Parish Working Group and appointed a planning consultant to represent our objections to Devon County Council. Currently the date for the Planning Committee is the 4<sup>th</sup> June.

In July last year on a lovely sunny Saturday residents walked from Yealmpton and Brixton along Silverbridge Way when it was formally opened by Antony Jinman, Polar Explorer and later we enjoyed refreshments and a special cake at Riverford Farm Shop. This path has been very well received by people in both villages and is regularly used with high numbers recorded. An information board will be placed in the bridge later this month Magni posts will also be installed as will 2 tree trunk seats. Thank you to Mike Stickland, Gay Murch & Sarah Gray for all their work on helping to realise this ambition of the community

Brixton Composters has been a great success not only in the collection of green waste and banking recycling monies amounting to over £4,300 in a year but also in allocating grants to local people ... £800 allocated to St. Marys School for raised garden beds, meeting the cost of the information board and magni posts along Silverbridge Way and a contribution towards a trip to Tanzania environmental project have been made. I would like to thank Steven Cane, Jacqui Donaghy and Alan Powell together with Gay Murch for all their hard work and commitment to getting this scheme off the ground and recruiting volunteers to help and their time on Saturday mornings helping to unload the green waste and making Saturday mornings an important time for community exchange. This project is attracting interest from other parishes and organisations interested in recycling green waste.

Our footpaths continue to be closely monitored by Councillors Martyn Oates and Debbie Jessop. We are grateful to local residents who walk the paths for regularly updating us on their condition so that repairs can be done promptly. The footpath leaflet has been updated and is in the process of being reprinted.

In the village the Green continues to look fresh and eye catching under the care of Mr Tony Davis. I would like to thank Mr Davis for looking after the Green. This year the Christmas tree was badly affected by the storms. Councillor Michael Wills has been in charge of getting Brixton on the map with 2 granite stones kindly donated by Graham Lanning to mark the entrance and exit from the village. The rocks will be in place within the next month. Thank you to Michael for his attention to detail on this project.

The project Dementia Friendly Parishes around the Yealm linking Brixton with the parishes of Wembury, Yealmpton, Newton & Noss and Holbeton has made considerable progress in the last year currently 30 families are being visited and awareness raising sessions have been held in each parish. Fundraising and events attended by local people have also raised awareness across the parishes. This is an excellent example of Parishes working together. The project is still the subject of much local and national interest and we are now planning to extend it for another 2 years to ensure that it is sustainable in each of the parishes as statistically there is evidence that living with dementia is a serious and growing concern for all communities.

I would like to thank Councillor Ian Martin, as Chair of the Planning Sub Committee, for his work in coordinating the Parish Councils responses to South Hams District Council to planning applications. During the year we have reviewed our planning policies and procedures to ensure that we can respond in a timely way to planning applications.

Following the publication of the Parish Plan 2012 the Parish Council set up a group of local interested people to make an inventory of all our concerns and bring them to the attention of the Highways. The group has met quarterly and has concentrated on making the crossing and the roundabout safe. I am pleased to tell you that cheese blocks will be placed by the crossing within the zig zag lines to ensure that visibility is improved and that at Steer Point roundabout the hedge has been lowered to improve visibility from the A379 and Steer Point Road. The exceptional wet weather this winter caused flooding on our lanes and roads and these areas are being addressed by Devon Highways with the group. I would like to thank Nick Colton our local Highways Manager and Andy Potter our PCSO for all their help in working through a very long list of flooding caused by blocked drains.

The Friends of Brixton Play Spaces continued to meet and the Play Trail is now complete with the opening of the play park at Elliot's Hill in March. We are in the process of finalising a leaflet to describe the Play Trail which will be available at the shop, pub and Fish & Chip shop so that everyone can enjoy the excellent play facilities we have in Brixton. Currently we are looking at how best to use the open space in the Canes Orchard development.

The Parish Council continues to support the school as an important community resource for our children their families and for the community generally. The Parish Council supported plans for the school to become part a wider Federation of primary schools. We have been pleased to note the continuing change and progress at the school through the energy and dynamism of the staff and parents which is reported regularly in the Brixton Magazine.

The website, funded by the Parish Council and the Feoffee Trust, run by Graham Searle continues to be an excellent resource and source of information about what is happening in the Parish. I would like to thank Graham Searle for keeping the website up to date and relevant. The Parish Council has also posted notices on the *I love Brixton* Face Book page so that we have as wide an audience as possible. I would like to thank Ian Calvert for helping to promote the work of the Council on the Face book page.

The Welcome pack is being given to new residents. I would like to thank Councillor Gray for her continued work on this important introduction to all that is going on in Brixton for new residents

The Parish Council has a good working relationship with the Police and we welcome their attendance at our meetings and thank them for the efficient handling of issues we have brought to their attention... particularly where they have made personal contact with local people about their concerns.

Our District Councillors, John Squire and Basil Cane, continue to keep us informed about the considerable changes for South Hams District Council and we are grateful for their support and advice on many aspects of the Parish Council's work and their regular attendance at our monthly meetings. John Squire has exceptional knowledge an experience himself as a Parish Councillor for 50 years ...congratulations.

I would also like to thank Councillor John Hart for his support and help on different aspects raised in the Parish throughout the year particularly as Leader of Devon County Council as he has had so many other demands on his time.

I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors for their hard work and commitment to the work of the Parish Council acting always in the best interests of the people of Brixton Parish. I would particularly like to thank Councillor Michael Wills, our Vice Chairman, for his support and advice and his great support to me as Chairman and Mike Stickland, our clerk for all his work for the Council. Mike will be leaving the Parish Council in June and on behalf of everyone on the Parish Council thank you for all your help and support over the past 5 years to me personally and to the Council ... we haven't always agreed but you have always been, and helped us to be, open and receptive to discussion and reasoning and these are important qualities in progressing debate and ideas. As a Parish Council we continue to make good progress in a time of considerable change, and uncertainty. This success is down to the Parish Councillors and local people working together in best interests of the Parish now and in the future which is going to be very challenging and complicated.

Thank you