

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Doddinghurst held on Thursday, 14th April 2011, in the Parish Room, Church Lane, Doddinghurst.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm.

Present:- Clr Dicker (Chairman) Roger Blake (Clerk) and 9 members of the public including those presenting reports as below.

Apologies from Tony Woodford, Chair of Dagwood Trust, Keeley Pullen Head of Infants School, Gary Waplington Chair of Doddinghurst Olympics Football Club and Vicky White of Brownies. Where provided written reports were read and are attached to the minutes.

1. Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 15th April 2010

Approved and signed

2. Matters arising from the Minutes.

None

3. Reviews of 2010/11 from :

(a) **Chairman of the Parish Council - Clr Mrs Debbie Dicker** – please see the attached report.

(b) **Village Hall - Chairman, Mr Gary Boyes.** – please see the attached report prepared by the Vice Chairman of the Village Hall Gary Waplington and presented in person by Gary Boyes.

(c) **Brentwood Borough Council - Clr Roger McCheyne** – Report presented in person as follows:

“Highlights from the past twelve months have been: that the new Doctors Surgery has completed all Planning aspects and is set to enter the construction phase; the majority of the improvement works at Swallows Cross road junction have been completed with some outstanding area to be finalised; funding for a replacement Church Path has been secured with contributions from the Borough Council and the Friends of All Saints Church and Doddinghurst has been chosen for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan scheme and funding of up to £20,000 offered by central government to the Borough Council and the Parish Council to facilitate the work. Issues remain with the high level of potholes in rural roads but the County were concentrating on major road repairs and minor road were not on their priority list. ”

(d) **Essex County Council - Clr Ann Naylor** presented in person: - see attached report and added that she wanted to focus on the non political elements and hoped that new ideas such as Healthwatch would be an improvement and recognised that some schemes such as “Links” hadn’t fulfilled their promise.

(e) **All Saints Church** - Rev Gill Frith attended in person and gave the following report. “The priest House was now up and running and breaking even with a maintenance fund being established. The Parish Council had provided the essential £40,000 to complete the renovation and the building was being well used with teas, lunches, talks and many more activities for the community. The arrangements for the new Church path were at last coming to fruition and a meeting was to be held in May to decide the type of path to be provided. The Churches worked very close together and creating a community

workshop and with the Infant School. There was also Sunday School activities such as “Open the Book”. A Harvest event in October is planned”.

(f) **Doddinghurst Infants School** – Keeley Pullen submitted a written report – please see attached written report.

(g) **Doddinghurst C of E (VC) Junior School** – Mrs Margaret Cooper, presented in person - please see attached report.

(h) **Dagwood Trust - Mr Tony Woodford** – please see attached report.

(i) **Doddinghurst Olympic Football Club** – no report available.

(j) **Scouting/Uniformed Groups.** – **Karen Powell** – Presented in person for the scouting group – please see the attached report. **Vicky White** – submitted a written report on behalf of the Brownies – see attached report.

(k) **Neighbourhood Watch** – **Peter Fisk** – presented the NHW Chairman’s report in person on behalf of the NHW chairman Bill Reid – see attached report.

4. Matters raised by electors at the meeting.

A vote of thanks for the work of the Parish Council was proposed by Mr Malcolm Veryard.

The Chairman thanked those present for their attendance and closed the meeting at 21.00.

Signed:

Dated.....April 2012

Chairman's Annual Report for 2010/11

Dear Resident,

This year I believe has been one of the most difficult ones since I became a Parish Councillor. We have had almost every week some vandalism or criminal damage. Most of this damage has been done in the centre of the village, mainly the childrens' play area. The new seats and picnic tables were destroyed by fire, damage was done to the play equipment and playground edging, and some of the paving bricks in the new path were dug up. The lights along the scout hut path were damaged by wiring being torn from the post. It is surprising that the culprits did not electrocute themselves. The Village Hall has had slates on the roof broken, and the parish office and room doors have been daubed with graffiti. Whilst a meeting was taking place the doors were tied so that the occupants could not get out. We have also suffered some vandalism in our burial ground and trees in the woods have been damaged.

During the heavy snow, youths were using snowballs to harass drivers. Budgens is often targeted by youths who stand outside whilst people try and go in for shopping. I could go on and on listing this mindless damage that has occurred throughout this past year. The amount of money that you, the residents, will have to pay to replace these damaged and burnt items is well in excess of £5000. This is why the Parish Council decided that nothing would be replaced until the youths responsible were caught and dealt with. To this end, we wrote to the Chief Constable of Essex demanding action. We are pleased to say that the response was good and Sgt. Ben Felton was put in charge of the police response, with some funding to provide police officers to patrol the village during the evening and also in the early hours of the morning. We have asked the Chief Constable that this work continues for some time to come so that the problems currently facing Doddinghurst can be erased. The Police have had some success with arrests and keeping the youths moving. The Parish Council continues to meet with the youth service and police to see how we can all help each other. Before Christmas three members of the Council provided mince pies and hot chocolate for the youths who attend the Youth Bus on Tuesday evenings in an attempt to start a dialogue with the young people in the village and perhaps find a solution to the problems. We were pleased with the evening, and are hoping to do this again, possibly at Easter.

I would underline most strongly that these problems could be dealt with quicker if the community got together to help the police and us identify these problem youths. I would also ask ALL parents to ask themselves what their child is doing and where they are. The Parish Council can try to help in these matters, but it is not a babysitting service for the village.

Once again we will be supporting the May Day celebrations, and hope to put on an activity afternoon on the field over Easter. We continue to help clubs in the village, keep our groundsman busy with litter collection, and in every way try to keep Doddinghurst a pleasant place to live. We hope to achieve once again this year Quality Status for our Council, and we have also agreed to work with Brentwood Borough Council on the vanguard scheme to develop a Neighbourhood Plan that the government wishes to introduce. This will give parish councils greater powers to run their areas in the way the residents wish. In May we begin the last year of the councils 4 year term, and during the year we will be trying to encourage residents to come to our monthly meetings and see if they would like to join the council in 2012.

I hope we will see more of you during the coming year, and also hope that when I next write there will be a great improvement in the youth problem.

May I wish you all a very happy new year.



Doddinghurst Village Hall - 2010-2011 report

This has not been the best year for the Village Hall for a number of reasons but I will outline this during the course of this report.

Whilst we have maintained our regular bookings we have not attracted what I would call the lucrative events that attract the much needed monies that allows for the upkeep and most importantly refurbishments.

The local groups continue to support the Hall including Pre-school, Doddinghurst Olympics Football Club, Doddinghurst Horticultural Society, Tuesday Bowls Club, Karate, Tea Dances as well as Line Dancing and Ballroom Dancing.

The May Fair is again to be supported, demonstrating exactly how versatile and functional the Village Hall is and can be.

Talking of frugal budgets, it must be remembered that the committee all work on a voluntary basis and we always welcome prospective members. I thank the committee for their work in managing and maintaining the hall and of course our 'Village Supporters' who hire and use the hall. Thanks again to Doug & Rhona Jacobs, who successfully ran a Country & Western Night with proceeds going to the upkeep of the Hall.

Also a thank you to Terry Fawcett and his supportive dancers who are currently raising cash to pay for the village hall floor to be professionally sanded and sealed enabling the hall to maintain its current character.

I again thank the football club who appear at this present time to be the main supplier of funds through various social activities, in particular the New Years Eve Function which is always over subscribed.

The bar continues to be the main profit making enterprise allowing us to re invest in the halls upkeep.

We have continued to maintain our legal requirements, including insurance in the region of £2700 per annum!

With regards to the committee we are very thin on the ground and it is becoming more important that new committee members are recruited to maintain the status of the hall. Without additional members it is very difficult to run efficiently and items get overlooked owing to other commitments so if you or anyone you know of is willing to offer a few hours a week then please contact us, we are only too willing for them to join us

We have suffered a large amount of vandalism including numerous broken windows (£300), damaged roofing and sadly one incident which will mean an end to the bonfire at the Christmas carol service. This occurred when the fire was re- started and apparently unknown youths ripped down fencing from around the village hall. This was repaired at a cost of £1000 which would have been more expensive had not the following given up their time to replace the fencing, namely, Mark and Josh Pallet, Harry Philips and myself (Gary Waplington).

With regards to the roof itself this is a major project that requires a complete replacement we are currently attempting to source funds etc with regards to this.

On the positive side, the hall continues to support the community well albeit I have to say sometimes taken for granted, people often use its facilities without thinking of costs involved and

are quick to moan when a problem occurs (i.e. use of the car park) so as mentioned last year to sit back and hope that it will last a further 60 years would be foolhardy.

This is a precious village resource and we look forward to continued support from the village, parish council and local community, both now and in the future.

Yours

Gary Waplinton

Essex County Council

Annual Parish Update 2010/11 - Synopsis

Please note the full report is available for inspection at the Parish Office

1. Council Tax

Essex County Council has set a new record low increase in Council Tax of **0%**, made possible by the government's grant, following last year's record of 1.9%.

2. Pledges

The Leader's Pledges set out an ambitious programme of work for the Council at the February Council meeting:

- **put our customers first** by increasing the volume and scope of customer transactions carried out on-line by more than 20%
- **deliver value for money** by saving £50M from back office and procurement processes in 2011/12
- **support vulnerable adults** by protecting the independence of people with dementia or their carers by increasing the uptake of personal budgets or use of technology by a minimum of 20%
- **support vulnerable children** by increasing the proportion of children in care who are supported in a family environment
- **increase educational achievement and skills** by working with and supporting schools to help them deliver sustainable improvements in English and Maths at all age ranges
- **maintain and improve the highway network** by investing £4M to fix potholes and other damage to restore our road network to its pre-2010/11 winter condition
- **make communities safer** by enabling them to reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime through 12 local community engagement schemes and projects
- **promote sustainable economic growth** by investing at least £1m to help Essex firms create jobs and take advantage of new market opportunities, including supporting 250 new apprenticeships
- **enhance the environment and reduce and recycle waste** by holding 100 'Love where you live' events with local communities to create a cleaner, greener Essex
- **promote public health and wellbeing** by providing 150 more sport and health related activities for 30,000 Young People in both schools and their local communities

The full ECC budget can be found online at <http://bit.ly/eccbudget>.



Report to the Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday 14th April 2011

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share some key events in the life of our school over the past year.

Our previous Head teacher, Mrs Sheila Lewin left our school in July 2010, after providing outstanding service to the school and local community. As the new Head teacher starting in January 2011, I soon realised that I have mighty boots to fill. Over the summer holidays, the school has had new gates, a new covered canopy area for the reception outdoor classroom and security access doors fitted to the main entrance of the school.

In the autumn term 2010, Mrs Vanessa Audas, the Deputy Head teacher was superb as the acting Head teacher and provided the school with the stability and leadership that was needed during a potentially disruptive time. Despite the recent staff changes, the school has maintained its enthusiasm and commitment to working with the local community for the benefit of the pupils and their families. In the autumn term the children took part in a range of events including the Christingle celebrations, supporting the shoe box campaign, the horticultural show and singing carols at Lakeside. I was privileged enough to be invited to watch the evening performance of the 'Little Angel Gets Her Wings' school play. The children were wonderful in their performance, and it was at that moment, when I knew that I had inherited a truly amazing school. The snow was a major event towards the later stages of the autumn term which caused at least 4 days of disruption.

We are great believers in bringing the curriculum to life through meaningful first hand experiences. As such, the Year 1 children had a special Victorian Day where they dressed up and worked with an external company called 'Off the Page' who brought a range of artefacts and activities for the children to explore. The following week saw our Year 2's experience life in a Crimean War hospital as part of their Florence Nightingale topic. The Year 1's have had a very busy term as they have also had a Cinderella's Ball as part of their literacy work. They dressed up as princes and princesses and ballroom danced to the rhythmic waltz music of J S Strauss.

The whole school has benefitted from the Sainsbury's school voucher campaign from last year and we used our vouchers to purchase dance sessions for the children. The Reception children loved the rock and roll dancing session; the freestyle disco class for the Year 2's went down a treat and the Year 1's prepared for their ball with a ballroom dancing session. This year we are continuing to collect both Tesco and Sainsbury's vouchers and hope to use these as effectively as last year.

Recently, 13 of our Year 1 boys and girls attended a cheerleading dance festival at Shenfield High School. Our children were the youngest there and their performance was so accomplished that we received high praise from the other participating schools. We continue to promote the benefits of exercise through our curriculum and with the additional extra-curricular activities that we are able to offer including clubs for basketball, gymnastics, multi-skills, tennis and football. We will also be starting cricket club in the summer term. This spring term has seen the introduction of violin and French clubs which prove to very popular and the children are making wonderful progress.

We have been working hard to continue to forge strong relationships with our parents and carers. We have held a successful 'Sharing Hour' where the children show their parents/carers their work and their classroom, we have held formal parents evenings, Mother's Day assemblies for each year group and I have recently formed a Parent Teacher Association. A very popular fund raising event was our Robbie Williams tribute night which was extremely well attended and it raised some much needed extra funds. We thrive on the parent support that we have from our volunteers and they are a real asset to the school. We also have a range of students who are either working at our school as part of their school work experience or they are attending to gain the necessary experience to study teacher training at university.

We have regular contact with the Reverend Gill Frith who has been so welcoming to me in my new post. The Reverend has provided some lovely assemblies which the children have thoroughly enjoyed. We also have Joan Dewhurst from the Brentwood Schools Christian Trust who visits us once every half term to take assembly. We also hold Messy Church every half term and our dates for the summer term have already been booked. The children who attend really love these sessions.

I am working closely with Mrs Cooper from the junior school who has been extremely supportive to me as a new Head teacher. We held a joint non-pupil training day in January and have plans to do this again next academic year. We work closely together to ensure that parents receive the same messages from us. Just last week, staff from both schools benefitted from training in Forest Schools and the Mrs Cooper very kindly let us use the wonderful woodland area. Our Reception classes are very keen to use this amazing resource on a weekly basis to develop the children's outdoor learning experiences.

Unfortunately, the Easter and school holidays days have prevented us from having enough time for the children to practise for the Maypole dancing for May Day bank holiday or for us to have entries ready for the Art Exhibition and we have had to decline to participate in these events. The extra bank holiday for the Royal Wedding has also meant that many of us teaching staff are hoping to take advantage of the long weekend and perhaps venture further afield from Essex!

We have a host of activities and fun events planned for the summer term such as: a Royal Wedding street party, school trips to the Sealife Centre [Year 1], Tropical Wings [Year R] and Thorndon Park [Year 2]. We are also preparing for Sports Day, the end of year performances, Year 2 leavers assemblies and the Year 2 leavers party. We continue to hold Story Club every other Tuesday for pre-school children and their parent/carer as well as Parent Lunch every other Wednesday which is always full. I am hoping that the first edition of our school newspaper will soon be available. We are lucky enough to have a parent who is an experienced journalist, who is working with year 2 children to report on key events at our school.

There are still more building developments which will hopefully be addressed during the summer term. We are hoping to re-furbish our ICT suite and improve access to this room by knocking through a storage cupboard in the hall. We are also hoping to have our swimming pool repaired. It has currently been condemned and as a result, we are unfortunately unable to offer swimming to the children in the summer.

My first term here has been so eventful and has simply flown by. I have been warmly welcomed by the pupils, parents and staff and this is a wonderful place to be. I look forward to working with the local community for the good of the children and families that we serve.

Keeley Pullen Head teacher



**Doddinghurst Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Junior Sch
Telephone (01277) 821064**

Headteacher: Mrs. M. Cooper B.Ed. (Hons) M.A in Ed NPQH

Report to the Annual Meeting of Doddinghurst Parish Council on

14th April 2011

Once again it is always a pleasure to join the Annual Parish meeting to listen to others and their contributions to the community of Doddinghurst and to share the wonderful activities that are taking place at our Junior School.

The successes of the school are vast and it would take many pages of print to share all of those with you. We have been very fortunate to have some excellent press in the local Gazette celebrating the many activities that take place at the school and the children's comments about these experiences. I also write a weekly newsletter, which can be accessed from our informative website on www.doddinghurst-jun.essex.sch.uk

At the beginning of the academic year we were delighted to be awarded the Silver Award for Investors in People. Only 5% of primary schools in the UK hold this award and we were asked to fulfil 130 criteria in order to be successful. This fantastic achievement celebrates the way in which the school values all members of staff, promotes their training to develop their role at the school and how well managers manage different aspects of our school. This, of course, results in a fantastic school in which our pupils grow and learn, with caring adults there to help them on their journey.

We have held many fascinating days at the school over the year to bring learning to life, such as, Viking Day, Egyptian Day, The Victorian Classroom – where two Year 6 classrooms were transformed in to Victorian classrooms with the children and teachers dressed the part and experiencing a typical Victorian Day. The learning that comes from these experiences is amazing with the children's speaking, listening and writing taking on a whole new dimension.

Our pupils excel in sport and we have recently won the High Fives Netball Tournament at Shenfield against other primary schools in the area. Our team are now preparing for the Essex trials. Our four basketball teams have all made it through to the semi-finals next month and we provide a full programme before and after school for our youngsters to take part in a variety of sport and fitness during their time at our school Physical education is an essential part of the curriculum and is crucial for our youngsters to know how to maintain a healthy lifestyle as they develop. We also supply a fantastic music provision for our pupils, with a highly enjoyable annual Music and Dance Evening taking place to show off their talents.

I have liaised with Mrs. Pullen, the new infant headteacher, regularly since she was appointed in January 2011. The two schools took part in joint teacher training at the beginning of January and we intend to repeat this in September 2011. We plan to join together for many activities

and use the talents of the two school to enhance their role in the community. What a superb opportunity this will be for our schools to continue to be successful and to share our successes with the community as we want to celebrate their successes with us.

Our Junior Neighbourhood Watch Team is highly motivated and consists of 24 Year 6 children this year. The calibre of input is excellent and they have participated in many tasks and activities set for them by myself and the Neighbourhood Watch team from the village. Our youngsters are helping to lead a Community Cohesion morning in May where all pupils at the school will be involved in activities promoting safety and security in our neighbourhood.



The governors of the school are very supportive and they have always provided a wealth of knowledge in their important role of helping the school function at its best. We have welcomed some new governors to our team and they have enhanced the body even further with their experiences of life and input in our meetings. I have an superb team to work with who are very interested in our pupils achievements.

The Church is a highly important place in our school. We have prayer books in all classes and prayers are said at the beginning of lunch and at the end of the day. The church team come in to school weekly and Rev. Gill Frith is not only a governor but a regular visitor to the school. We have religious education programmes run by the church for our younger members of the school. Our visits to the church are numerous, with each class leading a church service for parents and carer to attend. It is a truly wonderful feeling to be standing in such a fantastic building like All Saints Church or St. Margaret's hall listening to the children sing and praise together.

We are fortunate in Doddinghurst to have such a splendid community and it is a pleasure for the school to be an important part of the village life.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any suggestions or ideas that you would like the Junior school to get involved with. We are here to work with you and continue the good work that happens all the time in this special village.

Report written by Mrs. M. Cooper (Headteacher)

Annual Report - Dagwood Trust 2010/2011

My report for the last year is very short. We have only contributed to the school NHW for their use only. We will also be contributing to the leavers Bibles as normal. There are still vacancies in the Trust due to no church warden to fill them. Hopefully we will be complete during this year. There is nothing else to report.

Tony Woodford.

1st Doddinghurst Scout Group 2010 – 2011 Report

A special year for 1st Doddinghurst Scout Group as during 2010 we celebrated our Scout Group's Centenary, in honour of this we held a special church parade service in May celebrating not only the centenary but also scouting and guiding achievements of some of our young people in Doddinghurst. In June we had a Celebration Day at the Scout Hut and invited old cubs, scouts and leaders and David Tee the Major of Brentwood, all members of the scout group received a new gold bordered traditional green scarf.

In July we said farewell to Gillian Came after 13 years as Akela leading the Cub section, the role was filled in September with Bernice Davenport.

The Scout Group continues to strive; we currently have 24 members in the Beaver colony, 25 members in the Cub pack and 26 members in the Scout troop. Our leadership team consists of 5 Scout Leaders, 4 Cub Leaders and 2 Beaver Leaders, 3 terrific young leaders also assist the Beaver and Cub sections on a regular basis. We have a great deal of support from our volunteer parents who assist at meetings, outings and at camp as well as the day to day running of the scout group.

Our fundraising efforts, including bag packing at Sainsbury and Quiz nights during the year have paid for a garden clearance during the summer, a new water heater and new doors to the scout hut, further funds are still being raised for re-wiring the scout hut which we hope to do in due course.

We are most grateful to the Parish Council for repairing the lights which light our way to the scout hut during the winter months, unfortunately the lights are frequently vandalised by a small group of youngsters.

We continue to be a valuable presence in the community here at Doddinghurst.

Karen Powell
Beaver Scout Leader
1st Doddinghurst Scout Group

3RD DODDINGHURST BROWNIES – 2010-2011 REPORT

We had another fun, busy and successful year at Brownies. We were celebrating Girl Guiding's 100th birthday by taking part in the County Commissioners Centenary Challenge Badge and Adventure 100 badge. We also made a scrapbook to record all the exciting activities we did during the 100th year of Guiding.

Every term we work towards various Brownie badges and our theme for the summer term was out and about and keeping safe. We also managed to find time to have a night full of water-based games, an evening at Thriftwood Scout Campsite where we did pedal cards and demolition derby.

On the 27 June we had a fun-filled day, learning plenty of circus skills when we had a circus workshop run by Doody. The day ended with a show to the parents to show our new skills and to collect our circus skills badge.

The winter term was full of plenty of craft as we approached Christmas. On a more educational aspect we did stargazing and spent time learning about the stars and moon.

Another session had the girls doing various food trials in I'm a Brownie get me out of here!

The 20 October was the end of our celebrations for the 100th birthday and we celebrated by joining lots of other members of Girl Guiding and renewed our promise.

During the spring term our theme was disability awareness and we ended the term with a stufts dog show to raise money (£22) for hearing dogs for the deaf.

We are going on pack holiday on the 8th to 10th April, our theme being Alice in Wonderland.

We are busy planning another full programme and exciting trips.

Vicky White

Brown Owl

Neighbourhood Watch - Chairman's Report 2010 - 2011

This past year has been a very busy one with a lot of activities taking place; it has also been a very exciting one with NHW taking on additional responsibilities.

Membership to NHW continues to expand as a result of our recruitment drives around the village; the present total is about 260 members. Several of the members reside in the neighbouring Parishes. As crime has no boundaries they are most welcome. It is our intention to encompass more residents from the surrounding area and involve the various Parish Councils.

We regard an important part of our work as passing on warnings about potential scams and thefts as widely as we can. We are particularly grateful to The Link magazine for publishing our article each month. We have also designed and are regularly displaying our "Its Scary Be Wary" posters widely around the village. We are very grateful to the shop staff who have made space for displays on their premises. We rely on the internet for more immediate notification of warnings, but regret that we are unable to afford to send letters to those of our members who have no internet access.

We attended the May Day celebrations in the village hall where we distributed literature regarding both personal and property security and were fortunate to recruit several new members. As part of the work on property security, we decided to promote the use of a property marking system called Smart Water, which we had previously evaluated in comparison to other, similar products. It is much superior to conventional marking pens.

Peter Froebel runs this new part of our activity. He arranges to buy the kits in bulk so that we get a large discount compared to the price to an individual householder. Even so, we still have to charge £20 for each kit.

One of the highlights of the year has been the activities surrounding the Junior Section at the Primary School. This continues to be a great success and this is mainly due to the planning and preparation of Emma Clark our Crime Reduction Officer and Mrs Cooper, the Headmistress. We recently lost the services of our School Liaison Officer P.C. Paul Birkin-Stead who has returned to normal Policing Duties due to the recent cut backs in Police Numbers. At the end of last school year, we arranged a visit to the Police Museum and Control Centre in Chelmsford. Paul supplemented this with a visit to South Woodham police station, which the children found very interesting. We wish him well in his revised role.

The enthusiasm of the Junior Members is outstanding; each time we leave after a session with them, we comment that it was the best ever. With the material that Emma is providing there is a great deal of interesting material to cover. Mrs Cooper will shortly be involving us in a Community Cohesion morning which will enable us to bring Neighbourhood Watch activities to the whole school, rather than just the Junior members.

Doddinghurst NHW was very fortunate in being recommended to the High Sheriffs Office of Essex for an award for our work in the village and particularly with the Juniors. At an award ceremony we were presented with a Citation and a cheque for £200.00, This money is to be

spent on running the Junior Section. Doddinghurst Junior School was the first in Essex to have a NHW JS; several other schools around the county are now following our lead.

Robin Ekblom was our treasurer until he decided to step down from the Post. He instigated several initiatives to obtain additional funding for us for which we were grateful. Peter Salmon took over this responsibility and continued to pursue these initiatives; as a result Doddinghurst NHW was awarded £250.00 by the Dagwood Trust, again to be used in the Junior Section. Peter is now making enquiries with other organisations with a view to obtaining funding for NHW. To be able to handle our finances correctly we have created and agreed a formal constitution for Doddinghurst Neighbourhood Watch. We will now be holding an AGM each May.

Speed Watch is also a feature of NHW. Although there are other Speedwatches in Essex, we were the only NHW team in Essex to be involved in it. The Executive Committee of Essex NHW has received funding and they intend to set up other Speed Watches around the County. We now have enough Speedwatch volunteers to request some further formal Speedwatch training by the Police, so once an outstanding insurance issue is resolved, we hope to run more Speedwatch sessions.

The speed of motorists around the village is giving a great cause for concern. Even with warning signs showing that a speed check is in operation, we are still recording vehicles travelling well in excess of the recommended speed limit. At present we are in communication with Essex Highways Department with a view to having a 20 MPH speed limit in Church Lane outside the school.

NHW held two exhibitions in the car park outside Budgens during the year. These were very well attended by the residents and members of the Junior Section where we gave advice on personal and property security. I would like to thank the shop keepers for their support and allowing the use of the car park.

We also carried out a recruitment drive outside the Post Office where a number of residents also decided to join NHW. We also teamed up with Emma Clark to run a joint Burglary Awareness session and recruitment drive in the school in the playground at the afternoon school run. What impressed me was the number of parents who were already NHW members and were very supportive of our work with the Junior Section.

During the past few months we also undertook additional responsibilities as we learned that there is the possibility of scams during the television Digital switchover. Three members of NHW attended training about the Switchover. We are now supporting the efforts of the broadcasters to ensure that no-one is adversely affected by either the Anglia switchover this summer, or the London one next year. We are both helping to advertise the free or low cost help available to people over 75 and attempting to be ahead of the unscrupulous individuals who con people into buying goods and services that they do not require. Several sessions have been held around the village in conjunction with various groups and we have been happy to answer a variety of questions about the switchover.

Although we are always looking to recruit new members, we are anxious that either existing members or those joining become active. The workload on the few is very high indeed.

We thank the Parish council for their support in allowing us to use the meeting Room. To remind everyone, our meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at 2 pm. everyone is welcome to attend. We are considering advancing the start time of the meetings to 1:30 from June. This should allow parents to attend the meeting before collecting children from school.

Our Neighbourhood Watch does not operate in isolation. As well as all the support that we get from the Police, we attend Neighbourhood Watch Executive and other meetings, sometimes offering and gaining valuable suggestions.

I would like to thank all members of NHW who support me and give up their time, it is very much appreciated.

NHW is well established within Doddinghurst and I hope it continues to do so.

Bill Reid

Chairman

End of Reports