

ST MARY & ST PETER NEWSLETTER

May 2012

NEWS FROM YOUR PARISH COUNCILS

BOXTED

Denise Humphris, Clerk to the Parish Council

Diamond Jubilee Celebrations

Regrettably, the Parish Council have had to cancel the planned Diamond Jubilee Picnic. On the day, we would need to have marshals, first aiders etc. present and despite having tried to find volunteers to work alongside councillors no-one has come forward.

Neighbourhood Plan – Volunteers needed!

Boxted has been fortunate in securing funding for an exciting new project known as a Neighbourhood Plan, a new initiative of the Localism Act which is designed to give more say to local residents in matters such as planning. The idea is to produce a local document which would eventually become a part of the Statutory Planning process, helping to give Boxted residents a say in exactly what type of development could be allowed in the village and exactly where this should be sited. It is expected that the whole process could take up to 2 years to complete and ideally we need to set up a Neighbourhood Group of local people who would be keen to help in the preparation process and would include things like – establishing the area to be covered by the new plan, putting together policies, looking at preferred sites and producing a consultation statement to give all local electors a chance to comment on findings – lots of help and resources are being offered by Colchester Borough Council so you do not need any special qualifications – just some enthusiasm and a desire to help shape the future of our Village. We already have a planning consultant who lives locally who has volunteered to help and the ultimate success of this project will depend on having as many local people as possible involved. Please contact the Clerk to the Council if you can help on 01206 329019 or e-mail parishcouncil@boxted.org.uk.

Sports and Social Club – Portable Floodlights

The Parish Council have been successful in securing grant funding for new portable floodlights. These will be used by sports teams using the Playing Field to ensure that they can use all of the ground throughout the year for matches and training, thus allowing better ground maintenance and therefore lower maintenance costs. Strict rules for use will be put in place to ensure minimum nuisance to surrounding neighbours.

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 9th May 2012 commencing at 7pm at the Village Hall. This is a public meeting, and we look forward to seeing as many people as possible at the meeting.

LANGHAM

David Winter, Clerk to the Parish Council
**Broadband: an important item from the
Annual Parish Meeting on 19 April**

Why do we need better Broadband?

Businesses are less competitive without fast broadband and the availability of adequate broadband is now a major consideration when buying or selling homes. Most Langham residents receive broadband speeds of 0.5 -1.5mbps, far below the national average and well below the minimum national target and the speeds required to make full use of the internet. A vastly improved service is required if Langham is not to fall further behind.

What the Parish Council has been doing

Councillors have consulted widely with the purpose of defining the requirement and identifying both the options available and the potential suppliers.

The options & costs

Fixed Line improvements

BT – at least 2 years away, no confirmation of speeds available. Assume little/no direct cost to community.
LOCAL LOOP UNBUNDLING – tidier solution with good speeds but significant cost (£50K) to village.

Wireless

Wireless requires a small antenna on each property and has limitations such as a line of sight requirement and available speeds. But wireless is comparatively cheap and quicker to introduce.

Once permissions are in place (there is a delay in planning permission outside Langham), a service by BUZCOM will be available to the village regardless of take-up, possibly by the end of May. There is no cost to the Parish Council. The estimated installation cost is £135-£243 per customer, with monthly costs of £12.25 for 25mb & £32.25 for 50mb. BUZCOM is working in Maldon and Uttlesford Districts.

A service by COUNTY BROADBAND is dependent on the level of commitment from the community or investment of perhaps £5k by the Parish. The cost of installation is estimated to be £99-£150 per customer, with monthly costs of £0 (0.5mb) - £35(32mb). Locally the service is in West Bergholt, with Little Horkesley and Eight Ash Green soon.

Where we are now

An improved service is urgently required in Langham and in the short term at least, 'wireless' is the best option in terms of timing and cost. At this stage the Council prefers to retain a neutral position, and not align itself with any one supplier.

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