



**BRAINTREE**

DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

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**November 2004**

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

## Page No

Braintree Town Centre Improvements	2
Continuing Development of Braintree District Local Compact	4
Flood Alleviation	6
News – Affordable Homes in Maltings Lane	7
News – Council Tax Rebate for energy saving	9
News – Quality Councils in Braintree District	10
News – Reality Roadshow	12
News – Local Schools Triumph in Yellow Woods Challenge	13
News – Stay Warm this Winter	15
News – Drinking Fountains	16

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

AREA: **Braintree Area**

CORPORATE THEME HEADING: Regeneration and Transportation

<b>SUBJECT: Braintree Town Centre Improvements</b>	<b>CONTACT OFFICER: Barry Mills</b>
TEL/EMAIL No.:01376 551414 ext 2592 e-mail barmi@brantre.gov.uk	<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS:</b> Braintree Area Committee 10 <sup>th</sup> September 2002
<b>INFORMATION:</b> <b><u>Project News</u></b>  <b><u>What are doing ?</u></b> These major environmental improvements to the Braintree Town Centre will be in the area of Market Place and the front of the Town Hall Centre and include restoration of the historic drinking fountain. The scheme includes for the narrowing and realignment of the road through Market Place which will improve safety and will increase the amount of paved area for pedestrians. Car parking will be restricted to a limited number of disabled parking spaces in the centre of Market Place. The overall environmental improvement of the area is designed to attract people to the town centre and to make it a safer and more friendly place to be. High quality materials will be used in respect of new paved areas, street lighting, street furniture and other hard landscaping.  <b><u>Tender Stage</u></b> Tenders have now been received for this important town centre project which are within the allocated budget and Brooks and Wood Ltd who submitted the most competitive tender have been awarded the construction contract. The restoration of the drinking fountain in Market Place has also been tendered and a specialist restoration contractor has been appointed to fully restore this historic monument, which is part of Braintree's history.  <b><u>Next Phase</u></b> Detailed planning will now be taking place with the Contractors to agree the final phasing of the works in Market Place. Arrangements and consultations to relocate some sections of the Market, to allow works to be carried out, will also start. Further discussions will be taking place with Traders and Residents who front the areas of work in order to minimise disruption when work starts.  <b><u>Timing of works</u></b> The works are to commence at the end of January 2005, which will allow the Christmas and New Year shopping rush to finish. The contract period will be in the region of 20 weeks but the plan is that work will be undertaken in phased areas, so that disruption can be kept to a minimum. This will of course be one of our main aims although by the very nature of these works some disruption will be unavoidable.	

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

## **Communication**

The key to the successful implementation of the works will be communication especially with the general public and the town traders. It is intended that one of the ways this can be achieved is by having information boards in the areas of work where information on the contract can be given along with relevant contact details. This news item being the first of a series of news items to help keep the Community up to date with the progress of the work and forth coming issues.

## **Contact Details**

If you have any questions you wish to ask please do not hesitate to contact one of the following who are part of the main project group.

Barry Mills	Project Manager	Tel 01376 551414 ext 2592
Barry Hardy	Project Engineer	Tel 01376 551414 ext 2252
Jenny Claydon	Landscape Architect	Tel 01376 551414 ext 2565

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

AREA: Corporate

CORPORATE THEME HEADING: Improve Performance & Deliver Better Value

SUBJECT: Continuing Development of Braintree District Local Compact	CONTACT OFFICER: Angela Verghese External Funding & Voluntary Sector Development Manager
TEL/EMAIL No.: 01376 551414 extn 2329 angve@braintree.gov.uk	BACKGROUND PAPERS: Braintree District Local Compact Local Compact Code of Practice on Volunteering Local Compact Code of Practice on Funding
<p>INFORMATION:</p> <p><b><u>Background</u></b></p> <p>Since the publication of Braintree District Local Compact in April 2003, to which BDC is a signatory, work has been underway to develop three of the five proposed Codes of Practice. BDC has both member and officer representation on the Compact Steering Group. Whilst the Local Compact is the framework document that helps to clarify, and ultimately strengthen, the working relationship between the District's statutory and voluntary sectors, the Codes of Practice are the means through which the Compact will become operational.</p> <p>It is intended to produce 5 Codes of Practice covering the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Volunteering</li><li>▪ Funding</li><li>▪ Consultation and Policy Appraisal</li><li>▪ Community Groups</li><li>▪ Black &amp; Minority Ethnic Organisations</li></ul> <p>To date the following Codes of Practice have been produced following consultation with the statutory and voluntary sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Volunteering</li><li>▪ Funding</li></ul> <p>The Code of Practice on Consultation and Policy Appraisal is currently being drafted and will be available for consultation shortly.</p> <p><b><u>Implementation of Codes of Practice by BDC</u></b></p> <p>As a signatory to the Local Compact, BDC has undertaken to work towards implementing the individual Codes of Practice and in this respect progress has been made as follows:</p>	

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

## Volunteering:

This Code of Practice was published in January 2004. Guidelines are being produced for officers who are using the services of volunteers to deliver council led projects or projects in which the Council is a full partner. These are in the final draft stages and will be issued by HR by the end of March 2005.

The Code also illustrates ways in which employers could encourage volunteering and consideration is being given as to whether it is appropriate for BDC to explore this further.

## Funding:

This Code of Practice was published in October 2004. It will be used to inform the development of BDC's future policy on supporting the voluntary sector, following a review of existing support recently carried out by the Financial Services Manager.

## **Regional Recognition of our Success in Compact Development**

Braintree District's progress in developing a Local Compact was highlighted by GO-East during this year's National Compact Awareness Week (1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> November). The launch of our Code of Practice on Funding during National Compact Awareness Week was featured in their publicity and press releases, and shown on the plasma screen sited in GO-East's reception area.

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

AREA: Environmental

CORPORATE THEME HEADING: Caring for the Community

SUBJECT: Flood Alleviation	CONTACT OFFICER: Barry Hardy
TEL/EMAIL No.: 2252/barha@Braintree.gov.uk	BACKGROUND PAPERS: None
INFORMATION: Flooding issues and the Environments Agencies perspective.	
<b>FLOOD ALEVATION SCHEMES - BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	
<p>Please find below the contents of an Environment Agency letter received on 1 November which indicates their present approach to our flood alleviation issues.</p>	
<p>Thank you for your letter of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2004, concerning a number of flood alleviation issues in the Braintree District Council area. The specific areas you have highlighted in your letter are considered below.</p>	
<b><u>ROBINS BROOK, COGGESHALL</u></b>	
<p>Whilst we have been undertaking a study of the Blackwater Catchment, the final document has yet to be published. Once the study is fully completed we will be able to consider the various options available, including any extension to main river, to meet the approved strategy.</p>	
<b><u>STEEPLE BUMPSTEAD, LILLEY CORNER</u></b>	
<p>The length of Bumpstead Brook upstream of Church Lane, Steeple Bumpstead has been designated as a critical ordinary watercourse and programmed for enmainment on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006. We have funds available for pioneer maintenance works during the first year after enmainment and will then be in a position to consider any further additional flood alleviation works which may be required.</p>	
<b><u>YELDHAM, LEATHER LANE</u></b>	
<p>This watercourse is also being enmained on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 and once pioneer works have been completed we will be better placed to consider any further flood alleviation works which may be required.</p>	
<p>We are currently proceeding with the enmainment of all critical ordinary watercourses in accordance with the stated programme. Once this process is completed we will bring these watercourses up to a basic standard and then be in a better position to consider further options to reduce the flood risk.</p>	

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

## NEWS

### First Affordable homes for Maltings Lane, Witham

Page 1 of 1

**Braintree Housing Partnership** has welcomed tenants to the first fifteen new affordable homes on the Maltings Lane development. The new homes are a mix of two, three and four bedroom houses built by Barratt Eastern Counties Ltd, working in partnership with Warden Housing and Suffolk Heritage Housing Association. The new homes will be owned and managed by the housing associations and the new tenants, nominated by the Council, will be assisted by John Sones: the community development officer employed by the partnership.

**The project is managed** by consultants, Baily Garner. They specialise in bringing together private and public sector organisations to meet the demands for new affordable homes for local people, within the standards set out by the Housing Corporation, which manages government housing grants.

**Executive councillor Simon Walsh** comments: "These homes are the first of over ninety affordable homes planned for the development by the housing partnership. People's expectations and our standards continue to rise and we hope the new residents will enjoy living here for a long time to come."

**ENDS**

**Photo opportunity with tenants and partnership representatives:  
Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> November @ 10.00am, 33-37 Purcell Road  
Maltings Lane from Hatfield Road, right into Elgar Drive, right into  
Bantock Way and follow road round to the left.**

**For more information contact:  
John Sones, Community Development Officer, 01376 551414 ext 2168**

Note for editors follows on next page

Issued: 24 November 2004

# **MEMBERS' FOCUS**

## **The Braintree Housing Partnership**

Braintree Housing Partnership was formed in December 1998, involving both public and private sectors to make the most of investment opportunities and ever rising standards. Braintree District Council, Suffolk Heritage Housing Association (a key member of Flagship Housing Group), Warden Housing (a division of Home Group Ltd), Swan Housing Association (central to the Swan Housing Group) and consultants Baily Garner and developers, agreed to work together to provide housing of various types and sizes throughout the district to meet the demands for new affordable homes.

Countryside in Partnership was the developer in the partnership for the Great Notley Garden Village, which has received national recognition for its holistic approach to developing a community rather than simply building houses.

Future new homes may involve other developers.

The council continues to manage their existing housing stock and tenants for new properties built through the partnership are selected from the council housing list. These new properties will continue to be owned and managed by one of the three housing associations.

To assist people moving into a new area, the partnership employs a Community Development Officer based in the Braintree District Council offices. The role is to facilitate sustainable communities, promote social inclusion and provide best value to tenants irrespective of which housing association manages their property.

As part of the continuing review and improvement process, occupants are given the opportunity to complete a survey about their new home and the surrounding area after they have lived there for a few months. The results of these are used so that feedback from earlier phases of building is used to influence the design of later properties.

The Partnership approach is providing truly affordable homes working towards increasing property specification and raising management standards together with promoting sustainable communities.

**ENDS**

**c/o Housing Research & Development**

Causeway House, Braintree, Essex, CM7 9HB (01376) 552525

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

## NEWS

### Council tax rebate for energy saving is first in UK

Braintree District Council in partnership with British Gas have launched a new offer of £100 rebate to encourage homeowners to reduce energy waste

Residents in the Braintree District will be the first in England to be eligible for a £100 rebate on their council tax bill, thanks to a unique new green incentive unveiled today by British Gas.

Households that install cavity wall insulation can claim the rebate. With an estimated 10.3 million homes in the UK with insufficient insulation, a number of other local authorities, including Manchester, are considering adopting the scheme.

It follows last year's highly successful scheme to distribute free energy saving light bulbs throughout the Braintree District: an offer which was taken up by over 10,000 households.

**Braintree District Councillor Roger Walters** who has local responsibility for environment comments: "This is a great offer for the first 500 residents to apply this year and I'm delighted that we are among the first councils to be working closely with British Gas on this innovative scheme to help save energy, money and improve people's homes."

**Mark Clare, Managing Director, British Gas** said, "This is the first carrot to reward homeowners for energy saving. Many lower income households have taken advantage of existing energy-saving programmes but it takes eye-catching incentives to motivate middle income households, which are not eligible for free measures and perhaps haven't yet seen the need to save energy and reduce their costs."

Householders who install cavity wall insulation will get a £100 reduction off their annual council tax bill. The "green home" package will also provide a Home Energy Audit as well as energy efficient lightbulbs together worth more than £20.

It is estimated that the £175 insulation package\*\* could save £90 of energy costs each year\*\*\*. The £100 council tax rebate and energy saving lightbulbs would save customers £45 in the first year. Over a five-year period customers should save up to £395, with year on year energy savings.

Residents do not need to be British Gas customers and can call the Braintree Customer Service Centre on (01376) 331616 for information.

**ENDS**

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

## Notes to editors

It's estimated that wasted energy costs the UK over £5 billion each year a large portion of this waste may come from the 10.3 million homes across the UK do not have efficient insulation. These homes would primarily have been built before cavity wall insulation became required under the Building Regulations Act of 1990

British Gas is in talks with a number of other local authorities to introduce the scheme, including Cardiff and Manchester. The company has already shown how well cash incentives work: for example by subsidising the cost of installing an energy efficient boiler the company has seen demand for these appliances increase seven fold over three years.

The UK is lagging behind it's European neighbours when it comes to encouraging "green-ness" – French householders benefit from a 15% increase in their personal tax allowance for carrying out energy efficiency measures in their homes.

One of the easiest ways to reduce household energy bills is to use gas or electricity more efficiently – the average household could save up to £200 a year by taking up some simple energy efficiency measures. Loft insulation alone will save up to a fifth of the annual energy bill.

**Government HECA target** - 30% improvement in domestic property energy efficiency by 2010.

\*\*60per cent discount on normal retail price and option to spread cost over 2 years interest free.

\*\*\*Typical energy saving on a 3-bedroom house

**For further press information, contact: Cllr Roger Walters (01376) 553927 or Peter Chisnall, at Braintree DC (01376) 551414 x 3324 or Chris Trim (01376) 557752. Or contact Alan McLaughlin : alan.mclaughlin@centrica.co.uk**

Issued by: PR Section 10 November 2004

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

## NEWS

### **More quality councils in Braintree District**

Page 1 of 1

**Chairman Councillor Jackie Pell** presented two 'quality council' awards to representatives from Rayne and Great Notley parish councils. With Witham Town Council, they are three of just nine such councils in Essex and 70 in the country as a whole.

Parish councils qualify for the award if they can show sound finances, electoral mandate and local communication, including an annual report, administered by a professionally qualified clerk.

Braintree District Council has a well established record of working with parishes: based on support grant and more recently, with partnership and financial agreements for cleaning of streets and open spaces.

**Essex Association of Local Councils** county secretary Joy Sheppard comments: "The way that Braintree District Council works with parishes is a role model for any district or borough council and all political parties recognise the importance of the work undertaken by parishes. Many funding opportunities are only open to town or parish councils, which can attract an immense amount, not least because Quality Councils have their own government fund for projects: up to £15,000 per council."

### **ENDS**

Braintree District has 54 parish councils.

**For more information** contact: Joy Sheppard at EALC (01371) 879722

Issued by: PR Section 3 November 2004

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

## NEWS

### Reality Roadshow rolls out across the District

Page 1 of 1

From the 19<sup>th</sup> October to the 12<sup>th</sup> November the **Reality Roadshow** rolls out across the District when young people aged 13/14 years will learn about the consequences of anti-social behaviour.

The roadshow takes place within the schools, the day starts with a drama devised and performed by sixth form students from Rickstones School Witham. The drama contains many elements to be unravelled during the course of the following workshop activities. Each workshop has a character from the drama, who remains in character for the whole day, assisting the co-ordinators. At the end of the day another drama is performed showing what has happened to each of the characters one year on.

This is the second year of the **Reality Roadshow**, it has been developed from the successful pilot scheme which ran during October and November last year. The roadshow is a partnership scheme involving Braintree District Council, Essex Police, school nurses, the Youth Offending Team, Essex Fire & Rescue, the Youth Service and Essex Young Peoples' Drugs & Alcohol Awareness. Sixteen hundred year nine pupils will be taking part in this partnership event.

**Cabinet councillor Wendy Schmitt** comments: "We are committed to helping people feel safe and reducing anti-social behaviour can play a big part in that. Working with our partners the **Reality Roadshow** gives young people to chance to see, and hopefully understand, how their behaviour can affect not only the lives of the people around them but also their own lives and future."

### **ENDS**

**For more information or arrange photographs** please contact:  
Jo Charnley, Reality Roadshow Co-ordinator, 07801 458903

Issued by: PR Section 13 October 2004

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

## NEWS

### Local schools triumph in Yellow Woods challenge

Page 1 of 1

Pupils at St. Andrew's Primary School Halstead and St. Andrew's Primary School Bulmer have won £300 to help improve their school environment and have been named joint 'Gold Oak' winners in the Braintree District Yellow Woods Challenge. Pupils at both schools have collected 2.64 old directories per pupil. Third place goes to Powers Hall Infant School Witham which receives £100 and a 'Bronze Beech' certificate. Yellow Pages will also dedicate a tree in a Woodland trust wood to St. Andrew's Primary School Halstead for collecting the most directories in total.

For the last six weeks, ten local schools have been competing in the Yellow Woods Challenge, which encourages schoolchildren to collect old Yellow Pages directories. The schools have collected 2,151 old directories to be recycled into low grade packaging by Essex Reclamation in Witham. For every pound prize money Yellow Pages awards to schools, a matching pound is given to the Woodland Trust to help protect native woodland. All participating schools have been given free educational materials containing fun environmental activities to teach children about recycling and woodland conservation.

**Cabinet Councillor Roger Walters** said, "Congratulations to everyone who took part in this year's campaign. Residents of the District have an impressive record for recycling and The Yellow Woods Challenge is yet another way to improve the environment for everyone."

**Richard Duggleby, head of external relations at Yell**, publisher of Yellow Pages directories, said: "This year's Yellow Woods Challenge aims to build on the success of last year and the results from the Braintree District prove that young people in the UK are committed to making a difference to their environment. I would like to thank the children, parents and council who worked so hard collecting old Yellow Pages directories."

For more information about the Yellow Woods Challenge, or to download the educational materials, visit: [www.yellow-woods.co.uk](http://www.yellow-woods.co.uk).

ENDS

**For more information contact:**

**Tania Roberge, 01376 552525 or Anne Codling, Yell Press Office, 0118 950 69999**

Issued by: PR Section 15 November 2004

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

## Notes to editors:

**The Yellow Woods Challenge** is a simple, educational and fun schools environmental campaign run by Yellow Pages and the Woodland Trust. The Challenge involves working with local authorities and recycling organisations to encourage the recycling of Yellow Pages directories, save landfill, educate children about the environment and help keep UK woodland alive.

The Yellow Woods Challenge 2003/04 aims to involve up to 1,200 schools in challenges across the UK. Schools that collect the most Yellow Pages directories per pupil can win cash prizes from a total prize fund of £50,000. For every pound given to schools in cash prizes, a pound will be given to the Woodland Trust. For further details, email: [yellow.woods@yellgroup.com](mailto:yellow.woods@yellgroup.com) or call **0118 950 6999**.

**Yellow Pages directories are published by Yell**, a leading international directories business operating in the classified advertising market through printed, online and telephone-based media. Yell's brands in the UK are Yellow Pages and Business Pages, Yell.com, Yellow Pages 118 24 7 and in the US are Yellow Book and Yellowbook.com, all of which are trademarks. The Yellow Pages Directory Recycling Scheme works with local authorities to encourage an increase in the number of Yellow Pages directories that UK households recycle. A freephone helpline (0800 671 444 Lines open Monday – Friday from 8.30am – 5.30pm) is available to find out the nearest recycling point for old Yellow Pages directories. The information is also available at [www.yellgroup.com](http://www.yellgroup.com)

**The Woodland Trust** is the UK's leading woodland conservation charity. It has over 250,000 members and supporters. The Trust has four key aims: a) No further loss of ancient woodland; b) restoring and improving the biodiversity of woods; c) increasing new native woodland; d) increasing people's awareness and enjoyment of woodland. Established in 1972, the Woodland Trust now has over 1,000 sites in its care covering approximately 20,000 hectares (50,000 acres). It offers free public access to nearly all of its sites. Further news can be accessed via [www.woodland-trust.org.uk](http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk)  
For media enquiries contact: Penny Pulfrey, senior account manager on 01476 581112, email [pennypulfrey@woodland-trust.org.uk](mailto:pennypulfrey@woodland-trust.org.uk) or the Woodland Trust Press Office on 01476 581121, e-mail [media@woodland-trust.org.uk](mailto:media@woodland-trust.org.uk)

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

## NEWS

### Stay warm this winter and save money

Page 1 of 1

**On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December**, as part of the national Warm Homes Week, Braintree District Council invite residents to visit the Warm Homes event at Causeway House Braintree. Running from 2 until 4pm, this **free** event will help residents stay warm this and every winter and at the same time save money and the environment.

Council officers will be on hand to advise visitors how to take advantage of discounted offers on loft insulation, cavity wall insulation and replacement boilers.

Essex Fire & Rescue will have lots of advice about which smoke detectors to choose for different locations in the house, how to fit them and how best to maintain them. Visitors can also find out on the day if they are eligible for a free smoke alarm and batteries.

The Pension Service will be available to offer advice on what benefits pensioners are entitled to and to share information about other services and organisations, which may benefit them.

**Cabinet councillor Roger Walters** comments, "There is lots of help and advice available from local authorities, energy suppliers and government departments to help residents to keep their homes warm this winter. Anyone who is having trouble keeping warm should contact Warm Front on 0800 952 0600, this is a Government supported scheme which provides the main source of energy efficiency grant aid for households on low incomes."

## **ENDS**

**For more information** please contact:

Tania Roberge, Environmental Promotions Officer, 01376 551414 ext 2309

Issued by: PR Section 26 November 2004

# MEMBERS' FOCUS

## NEWS

### **Pouring over spouts for the drinking fountain**

Page 1 of 1

**Has anyone seen the spouts?** The drinking fountain in Market Place, Braintree is about to undergo a complete refurbishment as part of the project to improve the town centre. Originally there were two drinking spouts on the fountain, each possibly in the form of a lion's head, operated by pushing a ceramic button.

Any information on the whereabouts of the original spouts or detailed photographs of drinking fountain would help complete the restoration of this familiar landmark.

The drinking fountain will be dismantled and taken away in January so that the stone work can be restored. It was donated by George Courtauld in 1882 to provide refreshment in the market square, the upper troughs were for horses, whilst the lower ones were for smaller animals. On opposite sides of the limestone plinth was the drinking fountain for people which was operated by pushing a ceramic button to release water into cupped hands through a small bronze spout.

Please call the Landscape Architect on 01376 551414 ext 2565 with any information on the whereabouts of original spouts or detailed photographs.

**ENDS**

**For more information** contact:  
Jenny Claydon (01376) 551414 x 2565

Issued by: PR Section 25 Oct 2004