

From the Parish Council

2012 Chairman's Report

The Parish Council consists of myself as the Chairman and also I am one of the Council representatives of the West Trust; Ken Green who is the Vice Chairman and heads up the Footpaths Committee and has responsibility for the Website; Daniel Osborn who is on the Planning Committee and is our Police Liaison as well as the second Council representative on the West Trust; Debbie Hampson also on the Planning Committee. Derek Smith heavily involved in Traffic Calming; Roger Mence who is able to attend many external meetings on our behalf; and our newly co-opted member Sharon Brown who sorts out any fly-tipping in our area.

Not forgetting the most important member of the Parish Council and this is Lesley Smith who is our Parish Clerk.

As always the past year has been a very active one for the Parish Council. In case you are not aware we do a lot of work behind the scenes. We work on a voluntary basis trying to do as much as we can for our local community. As well as our monthly meetings and individual responsibilities we attend local and area meetings where decisions can be made that affect our Parish, we lobby MP's and local councillors, we defend the rural nature of our community, we encourage and support local activities, we look for ways of improving facilities and the infrastructure, we strive to keep our community spirit and, as your representatives, we listen to you.

Between a quarter and a third of our precept we receive from you goes straight back into our community in the form of grants and awards. Part of the precept is for the running costs of the Council which includes the Clerks salary and we have to put some monies aside in our reserve fund for unexpected costs – best practice is to have the equivalent of a year's precept in the reserve fund. At the moment because of the rather large amount we paid out for the repairs to Parkview Lane we are somewhat off that target.

As you may know we put the precept up by 3% this financial year. Out of 78 Town and Parish Councils in Central Beds we are 18th lowest for a Band D property – the increase is less than a £1 per household.

This will give us a precept of £6816.

The accounts can be viewed via the Clerk, as can all Parish Council documentation – minutes of meetings, correspondence, etc. - if you are a resident of the Parish.

Planning is one of our many concerns, both at a Parish and County level. Within our Parish, we will see all planning applications and we can make comments and objections for Central Beds to consider. We are also keen to make sure residents abide by the planning rules.

At a County and National level we are very vocal in our determination to protect the Green Belt. We are deeply concerned with the new 'presumption of yes' – in other words developers can put in a planning application and it will be approved unless there is a valid and strong case against the development. In the past the presumption had been 'no', the developers had to make a strong case for the proposed development.

We look to our Central Beds Councillor and our MP to represent and support our views at local and National level.

As you know the M1/A5 Link Road will go ahead, which means that the Green Belt north of Houghton Regis and up to the new Link Road will be used for housing development. Ken and I went to meet Houghton Regis Town Council to find out what plans they had and were somewhat surprised and dismayed that they did not have a plan. We suggested that they might like to consider a plan to have more control over development and infrastructure. We also offered our input.

However, on the bright side of the Link Road it may mean that we can have a heavy lorry ban and a twenty mile an hour speed limit through Tebworth.

Speeding vehicles and articulated lorries coming through our Parish are always a problem. Derek has been doing speed checks and, in conjunction with the police, has been using our mobile Speed Monitor.

The heavy rainfall has highlighted the drain problems in the Parish. We are in contact with Central Beds to try and fix these problems.

A lot happens in our Parish and we should be proud of our community spirit. As well as the usual activities there is the Rogation Walk on the 13th May, there is a Street Party on the 4th June, Village Games on the 14 July, and this year there will be an Old Time Music Hall at the beginning of December.

Finally, the Millennium Youth and the Community Awards for 2011. We want nominations. Both awards are to recognise a significant achievement or community service. The Millennium Youth Award is for 18 years and under and is a 'well done' for academic or sporting achievement, contribution to the community, overcoming difficulties, or other significant achievement. The Community Award is for over 18's and is a 'thank you' for service to the community. If you have a nomination please contact the Clerk, Lesley Smith, or any of the councillors asap.

You are invited to any of our meetings. They are usually on the third Tuesday of the month in the Memorial Hall at 7:30.

Phil Parry
Chairman