

Chairman's Report 2010

Once again a very similar report, the Parish Council has been kept busy with the usual village concerns of planning and potholes, we have tried hard to protect our village from unsuitable development, have had our successes, but unfortunately some disappointments too, as the decisions of Tonbridge & Malling have been overturned by Planning Inspectors.

The potholes have been particularly bad this year due to the weather conditions, but the resurfacing of Taylors Lane has been really welcome. The meetings with a member of the Highways Department are beginning to bear fruit, as at last our concerns seem to be taken seriously, and action is taken. Particular thanks to Trevor for attending meetings etc on our behalf.

There have been a lot of problems with large vehicles causing considerable damage to our village green. We are grateful to Sarah Hohler for supporting financially our request for some more substantial posts to be put in place. The design and positioning of these is currently under discussion, thanks again to Trevor for looking at this for us.

Talking of the village green I must of course thank Jimmy for his care of it and also Alan & Mark at the George for erecting and lighting our splendid Christmas Tree.

Parking in the village, particularly on sunny Sundays has caused a lot of consternation, a meeting with the Police, the owners of the George and concerned villagers was useful and constructive, we hope that things will be less troublesome this year, but must stress that this is not something over which the Parish Council has any control, if the highway or pathway are obstructed, this is a matter for the police.

Speaking of the police, we must thank our PCSO Kim Hockey for regularly attending our meetings, keeping us up to date with what is happening and taking our concerns on board, her help over the parking issue has been especially valuable.

Further work has been done to upgrade and maintain our play area, we thank Sarah Hohler and KCC for grant funding this work, and also thank Mike Day for all the work he puts in, not only physically, but also filling in grant application forms, that enable us keep this well used facility safe and attractive.

The allotments continue to be well used with the new allotments now under cultivation, thank you to Martin for keeping an eye on these for us.

The use of our By Ways has always caused a lot of concern and this year we have responded to a consultation requesting that traffic orders are placed on them as they are so unsuitable and dangerous for motorised vehicles, we await the response.

It won't be a surprise that finance has been an important consideration this year, with the withdrawal of Capital Grants from the Borough Council due to their financial situation, in future we will have to be prepared to find much more funding for any projects that we have, so for that reason, regrettably we have found it necessary to increase our Parish Precept quite considerably this year.

We also decided that we were not in a position to take on the ownership of Vigo Bridge, Terry will tell you more about this later.

We were absolutely delighted to organise the wonderful retirement party for Ray the postman, a real village occasion despite the snow, huge thanks to everyone who contributed to that very special day.

As always my thanks to my fellow councillors for all their help and support, to Matthew Balfour and Sarah Hohler for their support and advice, and most of all my thanks to Frances our Clerk, without whom nothing would get done!