From the Parish Council

2015 Chairman's Report

The Parish Council consists of myself as the Chairman and I am also 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, is our Police Liaison as well as the second Council representative on the West Trust; Debbie Hampson also on the Planning Committee and leads the Pond Project; Mike Wells who leads the traffic calming measures including Speedwatch, Paul Whitton who monitors Fly Tipping, Lesley Smith who is our Parish Clerk and Roger Mence who is stepping down from the Council. We would like to thank Roger for his contribution to the running of the Council, developing the Parish Plan, attending meetings on our behalf and taking the lead in getting a defibrillator.

It does mean that there is a need for a new councillor. If you are interested in joining the PC please contact Lesley or any member of the Council.

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 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.

Our Precept is this year is £7,020. 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. We keep a third for contingencies and the rest is used in the running of the Council activities.

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

Planning is one of our many concerns, both at a Parish and County level. At a County and National level we are very vocal in our determination to protect the Green Belt. The government is encouraging Local Authorities to use Brownfield sites rather than greenfield sites. We trust that CBC will take heed and use brownfield sites for development.

We want to maintain the rural nature of our Parish so we are keeping a careful watch on the housing development that will be coming toward our Parish from Houghton Regis. We have been reassured by Mark Versallion that the A5/M1 link road will be the barrier to the development.

The Solar Farm at Chalgrave Manor Farm has been approved. Work will not start for a couple of years. However, you may have seen the solar farm at Eggington and will see the impact it makes on the countryside.

Mike is leading our Speedwatch Campaign. He has been out with volunteers from the Parish Council and from the community - Barbara Jackson, Bernadette Inzani and Fiona Parker – using a mobile speed sign. We have been out on Toddington Road, Wingfield Road and Tebworth Road. We are limited to where we can use the sign because of Health and Safety. The idea of Speedwatch is not

catch speeders but more to raise awareness of speed limits. Certainly the high viz. jackets slow down the traffic. Please speak to Mike if you want to know more.

Paul has worked on getting the VAS repaired on the Toddington Road

Also, we are repairing and repainting the boundary gates on the Hockliffe and Toddington Roads.

We continue to pressure Highways to repair our roads. They will be patching The Lane in July. We know some people would have liked the money used to repair The Lane go to repairing other roads. However we decided that The Lane is a priority and if money has been set aside for this road we should use it rather than lose it.

We are getting all the gulleys cleared. The gulley in Parkview Lane was cleared and it has improved the flooding problem there.

Debbie has got Chalgrave a grant from Biffa of £4000 towards improving the Great Pond in Tebworth. We will be talking to the residents near the pond but the intention is to dredge the pond and clear the surrounding area.

We now have a defibrillator. There will be a training session on how to use it which will be open to all residents.

Last year CBC brought in a new Dog Order 'it is an offence for a person in charge of a dog to fail to remove dog foul. This will apply across the whole of Central Bedfordshire on any land that is open air and which the public are entitled to have access, pavement or otherwise. This includes …. pavements, public footpaths, byways, bridle ways, woodlands, agricultural land , access land and common land'. Please can you encourage dog owners to 'Bag it and Bin it'

Finally the Millennium Youth and the Community Awards for 2014. We have some nominations which is great. 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 18s 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.

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