

From the Parish Council

## 2013 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 will be co-leading the Pond Project; Roger Mence who is able to attend many external meetings on our behalf; Sharon Brown who sorts out any fly-tipping and along with Debbie will be co-leading the Pond Project; we have a new co-opted member Mike Wells. Derek Smith stepped down from the Council earlier this year. He has moved out of the Parish. Mike is going to take over Traffic Calming responsibilities and will be looking for people to help and work with him. He will be operating our speed monitoring sign at various locations in the Parish.

And of course 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.

This year's precept - in the breakdown of your Council Tax it would appear that the Parish Council have increased the precept by over 6%. At our meeting in February we decided that we would not increase the precept this year 2013/14. The increase has come from Central Beds Council. CBC calculates the amount householders pay for the precept by dividing what we ask for by the number of Band D properties in the Parish. There are, however, some Band D properties that, because of special circumstances, will get a reduced rate and be charged at a band C Rate. In the past Central Government has paid the difference direct to the Councils. Central Government has now stopped this. Now CBC calculates the tax base by dividing the number of Band D properties paying the Band D rate. This has meant that the number of Band D properties has fallen and hence the increase

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.

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

Speeding vehicles and articulated lorries coming through our Parish are always a problem. Mike will do speed checks using our mobile speed sign in both Tebworth and Wingfield. When the M1/A5 link road is open we have been told that we will get a weight ban through Tebworth. We will also press for a 20 mph zone through the Parish.

We continue to pressure Highways to repair our roads which have suffered over the winter. We are particularly concerned about Hill Close and The Lane. We have had some of the potholes around the Parish filled but there is more to do. Dot Brinklow brought to my attention the poor state of the pathway from the Queens Head and down The Lane.

We have applied for the Queens Head to become a community asset. Central Beds have a scheme whereby a piece of land or building that is central to the community and is used by the community can become an asset. This means that whoever owns the land or building cannot dispose of it without consulting the community. There is a six month consultation period. So if Colin decides to retire, Charles Wells cannot immediately sell the building and land for houses for example. The community could explore ways to keep the pub.

There are concerns about the bus service that runs through our Parish the X31. The bus service will change. The X31 will not run through Wingfield and Tebworth and will be replaced by a community bus the 74. The X31 will run through Tebworth only along Toddington Road. It looks like we will have a better service.

The pond in Tebworth is getting into a poor state. Debbie and Sharon have agreed to lead a pond project to look into dredging it and tidying up the surrounds but they will need help. Please can we have volunteers so that we form a working party.

A lot happens in our Parish and we should be proud of our community spirit. We have just had the Rogation Walk, there is a Street Party in Tebworth on the 1<sup>st</sup> June, and the Village Games on the 14 July.

Finally the Millennium Youth and the Community Awards for 2012. 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 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