

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

for

Edlesborough Annual Parish Meeting

19th April 2007

My report covers the period May 2006 – April 2007

Your Parish Council is made up of 3 Wards Edlesborough, Northall and Dagnall. 5 Councillors represent Edlesborough Ward they are John Wilkinson, David Brown, Marilyn Pryce-Jones, Julie Ratheram and Steve Munday. Northall Ward has 2 representatives, Councillors Kevin Cabbage who is Vice chairman of the Parish Council & Phil Conacher. Dagnall Ward also has 2 representatives Councillors Karen Coppen and me Anne Thompson. Cllrs John Wilkinson, Phil Conacher & Karen Coppen are responsible for all planning issues in their respective wards. We are all supported by our industrious Clerk Lin Sargeant who deals with all telephone calls, correspondence, burials and the every day business activities of the Council. This past 12 months has been a positive and successful period for the Parish Council with many projects taking a huge step forward, or being completed. I will enlarge on some of these issues later in my report. To achieve these results every member of this council, including the clerk works tirelessly on your behalf and for that I personally thank them.

I would also like to mention and thank our County Councillor Avril Davies and District Councillor Pauline Hannelly both these ladies contribute a huge amount of time and effort to our Parish.

Committees

General Purposes Committee chaired by Cllr David Brown comprises of Councillors Marilyn Pryce-Jones Vice Chair, Steve Munday, Kevin Cabbage, John Wilkinson, myself and two co-opted non voting members, Sue & John Parker, our Clerk Lin records the minutes. This committee continues to do sterling work, responsible for making decisions on the Churchyard/Cemetery, Memorial Hall, allotments, lighting and open spaces, thus reducing the time spent in full council when these decisions are ratified. Some of their decisions will be commented on later in my report.

Aylesbury Vale Local Committee. These meetings are run by Bucks C.C. and cover all the issues that are dealt with by them in the Vale of Aylesbury. Cllr John Wilkinson attends these meetings on our behalf. John continues to pursue the legality of the no repeater signs decision through the High Street in Edlesborough; he has also campaigned for white edge lines on the Bucks section of the A4146. Bucks being the only county on the A4146 not to provide this type of road marking. I am pleased to report that due to John's persistence this was finally agreed at the last meeting and will be implemented at the same time as the dragon teeth markings on the A4146 Northall Edlesborough boundary. Without Johns input at these meetings we as a Parish would simply be put at the back of the queue for '<getting things done' so we thank you John and look forward to your continuing presence on this committee.

Local Cluster meeting!. This is a group run by County Cllr Avril Davies and is a very useful smaller version of the local committee as it covers Avril's constituency of which we are part. Any local problems are raised and discussed at this meeting,

Neighbourhood Action Group. South Wing NAG meetings are a Thames Valley Police run group which deal with problems in our local community. Our representatives are The Clerk, Cllr Wilkinson and myself. The format of these meetings is about to change so these will be reported on at fourth coming Council meetings.

Parish Plan. I am pleased to report that this project championed by Cllr Karen Coppen & initially Cllr Kevin Cabbage is now up and running, A steering committee has been formed, comprising of local residents and hopefully 1 Parish Councillor from each of the three villages The committee is chaired by Ms E Braiden a parishioner and has been called the EDaN project. This is YOU the parishioners plan supported by the Parish Council and we look forward to lots of interesting things happening in the very near future. PAIN is the very important group which looks after our interests with regards to any Luton Airport issues and for this we continue to support them. Cllr John Wilkinson is the council's representative. You can rest assured that any future development plans for the Airport will quickly be addressed by PAIN.

www.edlesborough.gov.uk is in its very successful 4th year. The success of this website is due entirely to one man's efforts he has maintained and kept the site updated since its inauguration, its always been his 'baby' and that man is of course Cllr Kevin Cabbage.

We had many problems in the early part of last year caused by our Web provider but as I'm sure you've all noticed the site is back up and running thanks to Kevin's doggedness. Without Kevin's massive input this site would not be the triumph it is, so Kevin many sincere thanks.

Churchyard/Cemetery

Discussions are still taking place with the Church Conservation Trust about various issues. Plans have been agreed for upgrading the entrance and access to our Cemetery through the grounds of the old Churchyard in an aesthetic and sympathetic way. We have agreed to fund this initial work up to £15,000. To complete the project, the next stage will be to provide a turning circle so enabling the Hearse and mourners to access and exit the cemetery with dignity and ease. I would like to thank Canon Malcolm Grant, S. R. Dillamore Ltd Funeral Directors, the families of the three graves involved in this project and the advisor and architect from the CCT for their help advice and contribution to make these very important plans come to fruition. It is envisaged works will start in the forthcoming summer months. We have recently commenced work in the cemetery to make it a fully functional lawn cemetery. The contractor has also removed Ivy from the trees so they will be able to flourish and the hedge has been reset where necessary. I am pleased to report favourable comments have been received with reference to the contractor's ongoing work.

Burial and interment fees have been increased in line with other cemeteries in the area, a list of the fees can be found on our website.

Allotments

Allotments throughout the Parish continue to be well used; there are still plots available in all three villages. Funding has been agreed by Safer Routes for School for the footpath through Dagnall allotments for the accompanied village children to walk to school during term time, the work should be carried out this

summer making it much safer than along the A4146. Once again I would like to thank Dagnall Gardeners Society for being such an asset to our community, supplying everything any gardener needs, if ever you

want a chat about anything to do with gardening or anything else for that matter the Gardening hut on a Sunday morning is the place to be.

Edlesborough Memorial Hall

The hall continues to be well used by a large range of local organizations. The new floor is being laid at this present time and I would like to thank the under 5's and the other regular users for their patience and understanding during this period of unforeseen delays. But removing all the hazardous materials and having a much more user friendly surface can only be a huge plus for the Parish. progressing well under the watchful eye of the Chairman of the General Purpose Committee Cllr David Brown and our Clerk Lin the works should be completed week commencing 7th May. the cost is in the region of £17,000 Thanks to Cllr Brown who on behalf of the PC has secured funding to the tune of £15,000 for this project. £5,000 from Aylesbury Vale D.C. and £10,000 from the Lottery Awards for All fund. The result of which has left us

with reserves for future projects within the hall, thank you David. This year we also funded the fencing of

an outside play area for the under 5's so providing them with a much needed facility. We continued to support Dagnall and Northall halls with a donation of £1,000 each, to help with their everyday running and

maintenance costs.

Edlesborough Green

The green is still the centre jewel of our Parish and continues to be used by every section of the community. The tennis club continues to flourish as does the cricket and football. I would like to take this opportunity to thank these organizations for all their good work especially with the youth of the parish. We continue to maintain all the facilities on the green to a high standard so it can be enjoyed by the whole population. St Mary's carnival continues to use the green for their very successful annual event which raises large sums of money for local good causes and we are pleased to be able to offer this venue to the carnival committee. A film company also used the roundabout for 3 days filming causing much interest in the village and also generating useful income for the parish. In response to the youths a basketball hoop has been erected on the green. Tenders are out at the moment to enable a hard surface with drainage to be laid at the base, this is proving to be a costly exercise but the council is actively pursuing this. Costs also continue to rise due to vandalism on the green, but with the support of the Police and the young people themselves it appears at the moment to be under control. The PC have taken on the maintenance of the play area in Dagnall and when

the proposed play area is built in Northall this will also be maintained by the council.

Pavilion

The pavilion continues to be well used by the local clubs. The shower heads have been upgraded continuing the on going maintenance plan.

Road Repairs

We continue to report any holes or problem areas in our parish, as do our conscientious parishioners. Highways on call have been very successful and a response is usually very swift,

Traffic Calming

Yellow backings for all the 30 & 40mph signs, along with roundels painted on the road at all entrances to our villages have now been implemented throughout the Parish. Due to the long awaited speed review been delayed yet again, Northall Cllrs Phil & Kevin supported by the rest of the PC requested the Clerk write to Bucks CC demanding that Northall be treated as a special case for the present 40mph speed limit to be reduced to an acceptable 30mph in line with every other village on the A4146, this to be looked at separately from the speed review, we will continue to pursue this important issue. We continue to investigate all forms of traffic calming for the High Street in Edlesborough but this is proving quite a difficult task due to all the regulations involved. We continue to support our schools via the Safer Routes to Schools scheme.

Footpaths/PPP Scheme

The PPP representatives are Mr. & Mrs Thomas and a big thank you to them for continuing this important roll of keeping our footpaths open. Reported repairs necessary etc. continue to be carried out By Buck CC and The Chiltern Society. If we carry out any works we are reimbursed through the PPP scheme.

Rubbish Dumping

When reported, Aylesbury Vale D.C. continues to react quickly, removing large items of rubbish dumped in our hedgerows and gateways. The freighter service which allows you to remove difficult to dispose of rubbish twice a year, continues to be well used, larger items can be collected from your households by

A AVDC for a small charge. The litter left on the green and in the two car parks continues to be a problem but thanks to several conscientious parishioners it is kept under control, your efforts are noticed and very much appreciated. We still support the Green sack scheme for the disposal of garden rubbish

these can be purchased from Sue Parker our hall caretaker & bookings clerk.

Dog Bins

We continue to support the dog bin emptying scheme at a cost of £4,000.00 per annum but we feel this is money well spent. To be able to enjoy our open spaces without having to check where we're walking is certainly a bonus, thankfully the majority of our dog owners are responsible and caring people who make good use of this very necessary facility.

Dagnall Recreation Ground Access Path (Gaddesden Walk)

Discussions are still taking place with safer routes to schools, BAPTIE and Bucks CC with regard to the best way forward for this project. It has been proposed that a 'build out' in Dunstable Road would be the best option for a crossing but we have just been informed that it has been delayed yet again for a further

year. Unfortunately this path will remain closed until a safe crossing is in operation

S106 Agreement Northall.

At the request of Councillor Cabbage the PC wrote to Aylesbury Vale and the Developers concerned with the SI 06 agreement for Beacon View about the possibility of a variation of contract for the outstanding monies in this agreement. I am pleased to report that this has now been agreed by all parties and a new contract is being drawn up delegating the unspent £4,153.00 to the Northall Children's Play area. I would like to thank everyone involved with this decision which will give an added boost to this proposed facility.

Police Matters

What a significant difference our PCSO Jackie Dobson has made to our community she has brought a friendly face and a visible Police presence to our villages. The £7,000 funded by the Parish has proved to be money well spent. I will not at this point enlarge on what the PCSO has achieved as Jackie has prepared a report to be read to this meeting. I am pleased to report that an additional PCSO has been assigned to this area and from May both PCSO's will be funded by central government, with no extra contribution from the Parish. Our Community Police Officer PC Sarah Astley joined us during the year and what an impact she has already made to problem areas in our Parish, providing that all important police back up for the PCSO. Your efforts ladies on our behalf are really appreciated.

Community Events

We continued to have stalls at the Dagnall Fete and St Mary's Carnival. Cllrs Julie Ratherham and Marilyn Pryce-Jones supported by the other council members are responsible for a huge amount of work behind the scene at these events, where we received various comments on what you think we should or should not be

doing as a PC on your behalf, all these suggestions are taken onboard. A problem by a disabled resident was brought to our notice at last year's carnival, with regard to drop kerbs or rather the lack of them in Edlesborough, very important for accessibility for

wheelchair and pushchair uses. I am pleased to report that drop kerbs will be installed at various crossing points throughout Edlesborough this summer, enabling unaccompanied disabled residents to have access to all areas of the village. This surely confirms the usefulness and necessity of the Councils presence at these functions.

In conclusion

As you are all aware Council elections will be taking place in May and it is with sadness I have to report that our District Councillor Pauline Hannelly has decided not to stand at the forthcoming election. For the past 20 years Pauline has always been a very accessible councillor and was always pleased to champion any parishioner's problems at District level. Our monthly meetings will not be the same without her input, Pauline we wish you well in your retirement you will be sorely missed.

It is with regret I must also report that Cllr Steve Munday, Edlesborough Ward, has decided not to stand for re-election. Steve has served this Parish for 16 years and during that time he has always fought tirelessly for traffic calming in Edlesborough, indeed it was Steve that first suggested putting money aside in the precept for this project. The youth of the villages have always been paramount on his agenda. So Steve you must be retiring with some satisfaction knowing the basketball hoop, one of your ideas, is now in full use and some considerable moves forward in traffic calming have taken place this past year paid for by the Parish Council. A sincere thank you for your contribution in the past and I wish you well in the future.

I am pleased to report that a parishioner has shown interest in representing Edlesborough Ward on the PC and hopefully will be co-opted at the May meeting.

Due to a delay in papers reaching Aylesbury a vacancy has arisen for Dagnall Ward but I am pleased to report Karen still wishes to stand so if there is no other interested parties, Karen will also be co-opted at the May meeting.

This concludes my report.

Anne Thompson

Chairman, Edlesborough Parish Council

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