

## **Annual Parish Report 2010**

### **The Parish Council**

The past twelve months has been a time of change within the ranks of the Parish Council. It was with great sadness that we learnt of the death in November last year of Harold Newman who had served for 28 years on this Council. It was some comfort that a certificate marking this achievement was able to be presented to Harold by the leader of AVDC shortly after he offered his resignation due to his ill health.

Earlier in the year Suzanne Leggett also resigned. To fill these positions Peter Betts and Abigail Bond were co-opted onto the Council in October. Later in the year Cllr Diane Shepherd stood down owing to a family illness.

Once again I am grateful to all Councillors who have given of their time throughout the year. I should point out that Cllr Ashley Bond was also presented with a certificate last year, this recognising his 32 year continuous service on the Council.

I would like to remind everyone that in May 2011 there will be an election for the Parish Council and I invite as many as consider themselves able to put their names forward election.

### **Parish Clerk**

Our Parish Clerk Sue Mordue has continued to give great support and sound advice to the Council for which we are most grateful. I was pleased to endorse her nomination in the 2009 Awards for Local Councils - Clerk of the Year.

### **Police**

We continue to have a good relationship with the Police although it is PCSO Wendy Taylor with whom we have most dealings. They carry out speed checks at irregular intervals and maintain contact with the school with regard to parking. It is still a regret that their hoped for regular attendance at our Council meetings has not materialised but this is something we shall be pursuing in the coming year.

One forum at which we attend and have an opportunity to raise issues with TVP is the Neighbourhood Action Group and I am grateful to Cllr Abigail Bond for agreeing to represent this Council on the NAG.

I also wish to thank Cllr Betts for taking on the responsibility to coordinate the local Speedwatch programme. Whitchurch combined with other Parishes to purchase speed measuring equipment intended to deter speeding in the villages. For this to work effectively more volunteers are required.

### **Footpaths**

The Council, with support of villagers, continues to report to BCC all problems that arise on the many public footpaths within our parish as promptly as possible to ensure they are kept in good order. The dispute between the landowners and BCC regarding the footpath which crosses the gardens of houses in Little London continues and the path remains closed. This Council's application to BCC to have the footpath reopened by providing evidence from villagers that the path has been walked for many years is due to be considered in June.

### **Bus Shelter**

Following much comment from users of the bus shelter in the High Street near Swan Close the Parish Council has agreed to replace opaque plastic panels with clear glass.

### **Lighting**

No new street lamps were installed in the past year as a result of the Council agreeing to reduce costs in what was a difficult year for everyone. It is still our intention to replace all lights and we will start renewing the older ones this year but at a slower rate than previously. In a further effort to reduce costs to villagers a radical review of electricity used in the lights is being conducted with the purpose of getting a reduction in our monthly charges.

### **Affordable Homes**

This Council is proud to have carried forward its mandate to secure affordable housing in the village. Planning consent for the building of eight affordable homes was given in March and the preparation of the site has commenced. Building work is due to start very soon with completion expected by the year end.

### **Recreation Field**

The woodland is really beginning to grow. In addition to the 300 trees planted early last year a further 50 were planted in December. This phase of the project is now complete although further trees will be added in due course around the field. The wildlife pond, which was dug in October, enabled by a grant of £2500 from Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust, is also nearing completion. Planting of the pond will take place later in the year and during this month we are meeting with RoSPA seeking guidance on safety issues.

I would like to thank everyone from the village who has helped with this project.

### **Communications**

The Village Web Site continues to publish information about the Parish Council including the agenda and minutes of all meetings amongst other things of interest to the village.

### **Promoting Whitchurch**

The Parish Council elected to enter the Best Kept Village in 2009 and Whitchurch was judged with a score of 77 out of 100, up from 71 the previous year. We hope we will do even better this year as we have again decided to enter. Judging will be in June and we look to everyone in the village to do what they can to hopefully ensure a good result.

### **Representation in the Community**

The Parish Council is represented on the Winslow & District Local Area Forum where we can participate in decisions taken that directly influence the needs and requirements of the surrounding area and to bid for funding. Earlier this year we invited local organisations to contribute their thoughts and ideas for improving the village and as a direct result close to £1500 was granted to W&OYC to improve facilities for the young children of the Club.

Finally, we would like to thank Whitchurch News for reporting promptly each month on the proceedings of this Council.

Andrew Pain JP  
Chairman, Whitchurch Parish Council