

## Annual Parish Report 2012

We have had a year of change in respect of Councillors with Rosemary Lehup, Maggie Sanders and David Meakin joining the Council at the start of the financial year. Then sadly Abigail Bond resigned due to work a commitment which was a loss to the Council due to the younger perspective she gave. Also Rosemary Lehup recently resigned in order to let a keen new Cllr have a seat when Charlotte Lincoln and Caroline Katz were both co-opted to the Council.

There have been a huge number of projects undertaken this year namely:

- 1) Newman Close – this was officially opened last May and has been a real asset to the village. It has assisted with giving money to the Parish for a major project and to the safety of school children in providing signage and barriers to make the whole area around the school safer for our children.
- 2) The Council purchased 2 Goal Posts with nets for the Recreation field and these have proved popular.
- 3) We enlisted the free help of the Community Workers to assist with filling in the trenches on the football field and this will continue shortly when a further date will be offered to us.
- 4) A Jubilee Orchard has been created by Heather Maynard and Robin Moore which has included the assistance of the school children and we hope that this orchard will be fruitful for many years to come.
- 5) Parish Plan Questionnaire – thanks go to Cllr Meakin who has co-ordinated this in order to gain views of our parishioners. He is putting together the results which will inform the AVDC Local Plan.
- 6) A new Trim Trail and Aerial zip wire have been installed in February from the s106 monies from the Affordable Housing. These have received some tremendously positive responses and the children and adults are incredibly pleased with this new addition to the Recreation Ground.

I would like to thank the following people for their support to the Council: Andrew Pain – editor of the village website and emails for the community – he greatly assists the Council in communicating with you all on a regular basis. David Ryder Richardson – who monthly updates the noticeboard by the garage with minutes and notices as requested. Thanks to Tony Radwell for his cleaning and maintenance of the village bus shelters and his daily unlocking of the gates to the Recreation Field; and finally our thanks to Cllr Foot for his regular inspections of the play equipment and emptying of the bins and general bits of maintenance in the area.

County Councillor Netta Glover has attended our meetings frequently and has been a great help in many County issues keeping us up to date with developments. We have seen the implementation of the speed limit review with the 30mph signs being moved further out of the village in an effort to slow traffic further. Cllr Glover has gained agreement for a new sign to be placed by the Doctors Surgery informing of people crossing.

We continue to pursue the footpath across Little London where the Public Order has been made for the additional of the path to the definitive map. This was appealed by the 2 residents and there will be a public enquiry held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> October where all parishioners will have the opportunity of putting the case to the Inspector. If the footpath which had been walked for so long is not added to the definitive map then BCC will continue to pursue the 'reopening' of the footpath already on the definitive map which currently goes 'under the corner of the house'. It is however frustrating that during this period the path has been closed by the residents and we have been stopped from walking this path.

Around the school BCC cut back the overgrown hedging and trees from the verge and this has now given a much safer verge for children to walk on along with the new crossing sign which is operating at school times to warn the traffic to slow down.

In the High Street we had to unexpectedly fund the temporary removal of street lights to allow the installation of new BT poles. This obviously was not budgeted for however we managed to find a way to keep costs to a minimum whilst having no alternative to this course of action.

Unfortunately despite opposition we have seen AVDC grant permission for the redevelopment of the plot formerly the White Horse Pub and this was considered a loss of an amenity to the village. However the Swan Pub has now gone from strength to strength and continues to be supported by villagers. Also the Inspector has overturned the refusal of applications to allow building along Oving Road.

The Parish Council managed to keep the Precept at the same amount as last year however as the number of houses has increased due to Newman Close this increase has actually resulted in a reduction in the amount paid per household. As a consequence we are not planning any major projects at the moment however do have an amount in the budget to replace a street light every year. We plan to continue with this replacement programme slowly in order to keep the Precept as low as possible.

We have two major events coming up this year in the village with the Jubilee Celebration events in June and the Olympic torch coming through Whitchurch on the 9<sup>th</sup> July. We hope that parishioners join in these occasions and continue to attend Parish Council meetings in order to bring your concerns to the Council on a regular basis.

I would also like to express my thanks to all my fellow Councillors, the Clerk and our minute secretary Michelle Jackson.

Cllr Ashley Bond  
Chairman, Whitchurch Parish Council