

BGPC Chairman's Report 28th April 2014

This is the end of our third full year in office, and amazingly we have had not one single departure. I must make my gratitude clear to Steve for accepting the post of Vice Chairman, bringing his long experience to bear. And my thanks to you all, not just for trusting me to be your Chairman, but for the strong support in the January By-election to the Borough Council, and those thanks go to the whole community.

The highlight of the year has to be the opening of Potters Mede and the new pitches. A Parish Council has only two statutory responsibilities: Street lighting and Recreation Facilities. Football is the predominant local sport, but our facilities are not restricted to football: they are there for whatever sport local people want to organise, [Cricket](#), [Korf Ball](#), except perhaps Rally Cross.

My thanks to Hazel and the grounds staff. Rob and Barry are now full time employees of the Parish: I firmly believe that the way to get the best out of staff is to show them exactly how highly we value their hard work.

The downside of the year has been the start of construction of 171 houses on the Isles Quarry landfill site, and we have deep concerns that the contamination there is not being dealt with effectively. We will continue to pursue that in the coming year : these homes are being built, it is our duty to ensure they are safe for the future residents, and that our drinking water aquifer is protected.

Flooding: we had several problems early in the year with flooding around the parish: but these were not the same as the flooding around the County: these were a direct result of endemic failures in local infrastructure that have rumbled on for years, and so we are now working closely with the Environment Agency and Southern Water to ensure these problems are dealt with once and for all.

T&MBC have begun their Local Plan process, and I am pleased to see that they are properly consulting this time, and the process is transparent. We are updating our 2011 Parish Plan to be submitted as evidence.

Our new Parish Council and Community websites are up and running: still work in progress. Have a look at them, we welcome comments, and they will develop over time into valuable tools for the whole community.

And Finally, it was Steve's idea to try and resurrect the old style of Annual Parish Meeting, giving the opportunity for all our local organisations to speak to the village about what they have achieved, and their hopes for the coming year .

They say we are a secular society, not religious at all, and yet tonight we have had four strong Church groups speak, and have been given a flavour of how important Churches still are to a community

I am very grateful to you all for coming, this has been a very informative, entertaining and interesting evening, shall we do it again next year?

Mike Taylor April 28th 2014