

CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31st 2007

I was elected as Chairman in May 2006 and I would like to thank the previous Chair Cllr Patrick for the smooth hand over and sound advice in those first few months. The other person I need to thank is our Clerk Nicola Thompson for all the hard work that goes on behind the scenes and the very professional way that Nicola represents Harbury Parish Council.

The Parish plan is constantly being revisited and updated and the ongoing negotiations with regard to the location and layout of the new proposed social housing development are going well. Mr Charles Barlow attended a recent Parish Meeting and presented a proposed layout and asked for comments from the PC.

The PC is constantly lobbying WCC with regard to the state of our roads and footpaths, for the lack of maintenance and, when works are carried out, the quality of that work. One project that has been carried out this year is the making good to the subsidence problem and the subsequent resurfacing of Middle Road from the Fosse to the entrance of the village. The state of our roads will only get worse due to the fact that there is an increasing number of HGV vehicles using local roads that were originally designed to take light traffic.

The PC received a presentation from the newly formed Village Hall Steering Group led by their upbeat new Chairman Geoff Thorpe and a very focussed team of both village and PC members with their vision and proposals for the future for the VH. They are now in discussions with architects and busy fund raising. Excellent news for Harbury.

An issue that is not such good news is the apparent escalation in numbers of people using Bishops Bowl Lakes as a swimming pool; firstly this is an extremely dangerous pursuit and secondly with it comes the noise of people coming and going, the litter left lying around and the random parking without any thought to people living there. The PC has written to Follett Property Holdings requesting that they securely fence in the area and the police will closely monitor the situation.

This year saw the retirement of Farther Roy Brown. His happy smiling face and comforting manner will be missed by all in Harbury. The PC had a wonderful evening with Father Roy and his wife Pam along with past Parish Councillors

The PC received a visit from members of the SDC Planning department. They had been requested to attend to explain why there were so many inconsistencies in their decision making progress.

Follett properties have had another year testing the resolve of the local Parishes. Harbury has been at the forefront of this especially the planning committee who have waded through application after application with regard to the Bishop Bowl Lake project.

Harbury Station Bridge at Deppers Bridge has been an ongoing saga for some time. Residents may or may not be aware that WCC intended to reduce the bridge to a

single carriage way and install traffic lights. These proposals had been put in place with little or no consultation with the local residents. Once it was realised what was due to happen the residents formed an action group to resist WCC ably led by David Malin. They joined together with ward member Dutch Van Spall and other members of the PC. They attended an area meeting at SDC to defend their views and this led to the project to put on hold allowing time for proper consultation. Several meetings and many proposals later, WCC have advised that they will propose a temporary weight restriction while further surveys and other exploratory works are carried out.

I would like to pay tribute to Dutch Van Spell who resigned from the PC at the last meeting after ten years service. The PC thanked Dutch for all the hard work he had put in over the years and wished him well in his new venture. I too have resigned from the Chairmanship due to an increased workload but stay a Parish Cllr. The Chair has been left in the safe hands of Cllr Lockley ably assisted by Cllr Thompson until next year's election.

Cllr Kevin Biddle