

WITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL *NEWSLETTER*

December 2006



Greetings everyone,

In this 4th edition of our Parish Council Newsletter I firstly want to say a big thank you to Beryl Saberton who has been bookings secretary and cleaner at the Village Hall for many years now. Beryl has decided to hand over the mop and duster to someone else and on behalf of you all I would like to thank her for her work over the years.

The Parish Council is also due to retire as our term of office comes to an end in May. Some Councillors may seek re-election and others may retire but anyone can enter the contest. If you want to know more then please contact our Clerk, Sue Bell, or any member of the Council.

However, we will be able to leave office with a new village development plan in place. Thank you to Darren and Catherine and all the members of the Parish Plan Group, and to everyone who has returned their questionnaire. We have had a good response and should have a draft Plan in place for March.

Before I draw to a close I must remark upon some threats to our community life. The Post Office may be under threat. Please do what you can to support the Thursday opening in the Village Hall and the local Post Offices generally. I also regret the loss of the collection for the Princess of Wales Hospital but hope you will support the now independent Witcham Village Carol Singers as they sing and make a licensed collection for Christian Aid. I hope very much that the activities that have been hitherto held by the Church such as the Big Breakfast, the Summer Ball and the Street Rounders will also continue to take place as they have been high profile events for the whole community.

Members of the Village Hall Committee are already planning a bigger and better Annual Peashoot and you are cordially invited to attend a planning meeting on Tuesday 16 January at 8.00pm in the Village Hall. The help of more people will ensure that this event regains the status it once had.

Many thanks to you all, Witcham continues to be a great place to live. May I wish you and yours a happy Christmas and a good New Year.

Ashley Bamforth
Chairman

Best Kept Garden Competition Results 2006

Best Vegetable: Fern House, High Street
Best Flower: The Brambles, High Street
Best Overall: 24 High Street

Commendations:

Barn Side Cottage, High Street (Roses)
21 The Slade (a magical garden for children)
19 Westway Place (unusual vegetables and exceptional fuschias)

The judges, Ruth and Sandra, had a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon and thanked us for the opportunity to visit the very special gardens of Witcham. There were some wonderful comments written up by the judges and we are grateful to them and to Mrs Plumb who took the role of accompanying them as guide around the village. Well done everyone!

2007/8 Precept

After a prudent review of budgets we are planning to freeze the parish Precept at last year's rate of £9000.

Ouse Wash Drovers

The lease with the RSPB for shooting rights will be renewed at £650pa.

Recreation Ground

We have helped the cricket club with the purchase of new mobile cricket nets. As far as we understand current plans are to use them against the back of the bus shelter and they will be erected in the Spring.

The application to register the recreation ground as 'Village Green' under the Commons Registration Act 1965/SI1813 has been rejected by the Commons Registration Authority, Cambridgeshire County Council.

Rights of Ways - Drovers

To help preserve the condition of the droves, the County Council is proposing to place gates and locks on some of the droves between October and May. Access for horses and pedestrians will be unaffected but it will bar use by leisure seeking 4-wheel drive vehicle owners. Overgrown hedges to be cut.

Reduce - Re-use - Recycle - Reduce - Re-use - Recycle...

Cambridgeshire recycles and composts more household waste than any other county – 44% in 2005/6 *BUT* as the fastest growing county it is set to exceed permitted landfill allowances by 2010 which will result in a £150 fine for every tonne of waste sent to landfill. This could cost millions at the expense of other council services!

You can help: **Reduce** – buy carefully - check amount of packaging. **Re-use** – pass unwanted goods on to charity shops. **Recycle** – use kerbside collections, banks and recycling centres as much as you can. 170,000 tonnes was landfilled last year!
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/wastepfi
www.recap.co.uk

'Save your Post Office'

The Countryside Alliance informs us that whilst the Government continues to deliberate over their future, 14,000 sub Post Offices face a period of great uncertainty. The Post Office Card Account and TV licensing have already gone and in the last year alone £168m of Government services have been taken away from Post Offices. What can you do to help – send a letter to Jim Fitzpatrick, MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Employment Relations and Postal Services Department of Trade and Industry, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET. Say how important your local Post Office is to you, the role it plays in your local community and copy it to your local MP and Parish Clerk for forwarding to the Countryside Alliance.

Community Policing

Julie Collins, PCSO, will be joining PC Humble covering Downham villages. She will attend Council meetings from time to time in addition to regular surgeries already established at the village crossroads.

Drivers...

Cambridgeshire County Council will be running the “*When Will You Have Had Too Much?*” National Drink Drive Campaign over the coming weeks. They have also produced a very useful leaflet on driving near water – copies can be obtained from their Road Safety Team on 01480 375105 or visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Planning

East Cambs Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement, adopted by East Cambs District Council 17 October 2006. May be inspected www.eastcambs.gov.uk, or the Council’s offices at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, or libraries.

Cambs & Peterborough Minerals and Waste Plan

Consultation on details of preferred options in terms of policies which will guide minerals and waste development until 2021 and site specific proposals. Do visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk for local details.

Registration of Births, Marriages, Civil Partnerships and Deaths

County Council is proposing to improve services as part of national modernisation programme for accessible, flexible, relevant and customer focused service whilst adhering to legislative framework. www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/community/bmd/bmdv2021

STREET CLEANING (early Friday mornings)
 22 December 2006, and thereafter approximately every 3 weeks

RECYCLING COLLECTIONS (Fridays)
 8 December 2006 22 December 2006 *6 January 2007
 19 January 2007 2 February 2007 16 February 2007
 Please put your refuse and recycling items out by 7.00 am on day of collection. (earliest is the evening before, otherwise you are deemed to be committing an offence!) *Saturday

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS
 Meetings are held in the Village Hall, normally on the 2nd Tuesday in the month
 9 January 2007 13 February 2007 13 March 2007
 Any items for the agenda should be placed with the Clerk at least 1 week prior to the scheduled meeting.
 There is an opportunity for the electorate to attend these meetings and provision for public participation/question time commencing at 7.15 pm. Council business commences at 7.30 pm. Please see the noticeboard to view agendas and minutes, and any changes to proposed meeting dates. Additional meetings may be called to consider planning applications as required by the planning authority.

NAME	CONTACT (evenings preferred)
CHAIRMAN Ashley Bamforth	01353 777453
VICE-CHAIRMAN Paul Chambers	01353 778225
CLERK Susan Bell	01353 778147
COUNCILLORS	
David Saberton	01353 777423
Mark Wilkin	01353 776143
Don Saberton	01353 777093
Chris Watson	01353 776394
COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS	
Phillip Bailey Cambridgeshire County Council	2 Townsend, Little Downham, Ely, Cambs
Brenda Daters East Cambridgeshire County Council	Barton Heights, 78a Barton Road, Ely Cambs 01353 662809
Alan White East Cambridgeshire County Council	76 Ely Road, Little Downham, Ely, Cambs 01353 699295

