

SAMPFORD ARUNDEL PARISH MEETING

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2009/2010

I would like to begin my second annual report as Chair of Sampford Arundel Parish Council by thanking my fellow councillors for their support during the year. Thank you all very much.

Also, I could not have carried out the duties and responsibilities of Chair of the Parish Council without the support of Maggie, our Parish Clerk. She does an excellent job responding to mine and the Councillors requests for information, meetings, balancing the books etc. I enjoy working with her. Thank you Maggie.

Now on to what has been happening this year in our Parish:

ROAD & HIGHWAYS MATTERS:

A38 Unfortunately no progress has been made since the traffic survey was undertaken in April 2009 regarding an alternative traffic system concerning the lane to Holywell Lake other than Somerset County Council, despite promising the Parish Council that it would be involved in the process of deciding how to address this very important issue, deciding in a meeting to which we were not invited, to do nothing about the lane. We are still pursuing this issue in a number of ways.

Other councils in the area, Wellington Town Council, Wellington Without and the local police are fully supportive of the Council and agree with our concerns, but we still seem to make little progress to resolve the issues.

LOCAL PARISH ISSUES:

Precept:

For the fourth year running we have been able to keep the precept unchanged. This is very important in a small parish with a very small number of households and enables Taunton Deane to keep the increase in council tax down for our parishioners. It does mean very careful monitoring of our financial situation by Maggie, a job which she does very competently and thoroughly, as our bank interest now is practically nil compared to the small sums we received in previous years. As a council, we have to be very careful when spending our money and discuss any financial outlay in some detail.

THE PARISH PLAN:

Affordable Housing:

One the objectives in our Parish Plan was to investigate the possibility of having some Affordable Housing within the parish and in my report last year I gave some details regarding undertaking a feasibility study into this. With the support of the Community Council for Somerset we have undertaken the study but there are only three or possibly four requests for such housing. In our monthly Parish Council Meeting that follows this meeting, Felix Marsh from the Community Council will bring us up to date with any progress since last month and whether or not we could pursue this issue. I have to say though, it may be unlikely that we can progress any further due to the low numbers of requests for housing.

A Parent + Toddler Group, Playgroup/Pre-school:

Out of a figure of 140 respondents in the Parish Plan survey, 80 were in favour of the parish having a Parent + Toddler Group and 111 were in favour of a Playgroup/Pre-school. At the time the Parish council listed this issue as a Priority 3 and stated that "it would be happy to see such a facility re-started if anyone were to come forward to do it".

I am delighted that progress is being made towards this by the village school and the details so far were highlighted in the latest issue of the Pump. Mr East the Head of the school is driving this forward and is here with us tonight to give us more details.

SUPPORTING VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS:

As I have previously mentioned, money is very tight at present and although last year we were able to give two grants to village organisations, we are not in such a position this year. This means that our support for village organisations has, in most cases, to be non-financial support. However, we are able to give one donation and this is from funds that have been held by the Parish Council under the Allsorts Funding that was obtained several years ago by the previous Parish Clerk. This donation will be made this evening.

RED TELEPHONE BOXES:

Late last year, BT offered the parish council the right to purchase the two red telephone boxes in the parish for a sum of £1.00 each. This offer is part of a national initiative due to the very little usage of the public telephone boxes in the age of the mobile telephone.

After discussing this at a council meeting, we have decided to accept this offer to buy and I signed the contract last month. BT will remove the telephone equipment and then the boxes will be ours. BT will pay the electricity bills to light the telephone boxes for five years after that, it will be the responsibility of the parish council.

Nationally, there have been many different uses for these phone boxes and we have discussed how we might use ours at our council meetings. If anyone else has any suggestions, please let us know.

Inn at Sampford/Beam Bridge:

Just prior to last year's meeting we heard that the Inn at Sampford was to be renamed the Beambridge Inn and I was delighted, as Chair of the Parish Council, to be asked to "cut the ribbon" at the renaming event on 12 July 2009.

SPECIAL THANKS:

I am sure that we, as a Parish Council, are very lucky to have such helpful and available officials linked to us from other organisations. These folk are, in alphabetical order:-

- **Peter Bowler for managing our website**
- **David Greig, Parish Liaison Officer, Taunton Deane Borough Council**
- **Ross Henley, Somerset County Councillor for our parish**
- **Chris Hill, Taunton Deane Borough Councillor for the Monument Ward**
- **Tess Wilson and her team, Avon and Somerset Police Authority**

On behalf of the council, I would like to thank them all for all your support, help and interest in our parish and its affairs.

Janet Lloyd
Chair
Sampford Arundel Parish Council
9 June 2010