ES&BG

**Ecchinswell, Sydmonton & Bishops Green Parish Council News**

The first item on the agenda at this month’s Parish Council meeting, was the gritting or rather the non-gritting of the Ecchinswell to Kingsclere road. Firstly a big thank you to all who wrote to Roads @ Hampshire County Council & Cllr Tom Thacker regarding this unacceptable and dangerous state of affairs. Cllr Thacker is supporting our demands and clearly your endeavours have achieved the route being gritted twice in February. However at this time it is unclear whether the gritting situation will be regularised. Perhaps Hampshire Highways have heads buried in salted-sand at the moment. We will continue to press for a satisfactory conclusion.

We have received comment that aircraft noise has increased recently. On checking with the CAA they have confirmed that aircraft routes over this Parish have not changed in 10 years. However, RAF Odiham have told us that there will be a small increase in Chinook training flights in the coming year. We can only applaud these brave men who risk their lives to keep ours safe.

Basingstoke & Deane BC have raised funds from the developers who have undertaken the redevelopment at Bishops Green. This pot of gold is called the Community Infrastructure levy and is for the benefit of the community where it is raised. To this end the PC is currently wading through the treacle of bureaucracy in an endeavour to secure moneys to resurface the carpark and entrance at the Ecchinswell Village Hall.

Around the villages there is flooding on parts of the roads due to clogged ditches. The flooding is causing damage to the carriageway and is dangerous for all road users. Unfortunately the “Riparian Owners” who are the owners of the land abutting the highway, are responsible for maintaining these ditches, but rarely do so. To resolve the worst cases of flooding, the Parish Council is using public funds to clear some ditches. We are now looking at ways to back-charge the land owners as it seems unfair that the community should pay for what is their responsibility.

Cabinets to support super-fast broadband are in the process of being installed in some areas. However those in charge of the scheme seem reluctant to declare precisely who will benefit. The only statement forthcoming is that 95% of Hampshire will receive SFB. We have said this is similar to saying that 5% of the community will die very soon, but the remainder is safe. So obviously we are very interested in the 5%. But there are none so deaf etc.

Finally our AGM is to be held at Ecchinswell Village Hall on 13th May at 19:30. Please put it in your diaries for a spell binding hour of local news and comment.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held at Ecchinswell Village Hall on 11th March at 19:30 hours. We look forward to seeing you.

John Broxis

Chair ES&BG PC