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

Welcome to the winter edition of your Parish Magazine. There is as always a mixture of good and not so good news so let’s start with the good.

The Parish Council Precept is the tax charged on each property to fund the activities of the Council that it undertakes for the benefit of the community. For the forthcoming year 2015/16 we have been able to restrict the rise to a modest 1.5% which unusually results in an actual decrease on a Band D house of 2p per annum.

With the prospect of inclement weather to come we have decided to provide you all with a brief monthly summary of potholes reported/repaired, and still urge you to be vigilant and responsible in forwarding details of any we have missed to clerk@ecchinswell-pc.gov.uk . So far in 2015 we have reported 4 potholes and pursued outstanding work on 2 others. We would also like to take the opportunity to remind landowners that it is their responsibility to ensure that ditches bordering the road are kept clear to avoid the accumulation of water. This is particularly relevant when hedge cutting is being undertaken as the debris from this is a major source of many blockages.

We have previously mentioned the Local Plan developed by Basingstoke and Deane. Following its submission a government Inspector has instructed the Borough to increase their plan for the building of 748 homes to 850 per annum. It is expected that the development will be principally located in the areas in and around Basingstoke, Whitchurch, and Overton. We will keep you updated on developments in due course.

Due to the reduction in local bus services it has been arranged that a shared taxi service should operate between The Royal Oak and Newbury giving as many people as possible the opportunity to visit Newbury at regular times during the week. The cost of this service is £4.60 single or £6.00 return. To use the service, please call Hampshire County Council on 01962 846786 and request a membership pack, which gives all details & how to book the service.

Now that the speed restriction measures at Brocks Green have been completed we are arranging to have a traffic survey carried out to in order to monitor current traffic behaviour. Watch this space.

We continue to liaise with neighbouring Parish Councils in order to facilitate a joint home security seminar. This is an extremely important subject and will be supported by both the Police Force and local security equipment suppliers, so please let us know if you have any views on the format it should take. Intelligent advice is on the agenda, pressure selling is not.

One allotment has just become vacant. A rare opportunity for the green-fingered in the Parish. Also we still have a vacancy for a Parish Councillor. If you would like to support your community, please contact our friendly Parish Clerk at clerk@ecchinswell-pc.gov.uk

Michael Sparrow – Parish Councillor