Ecchinswell, Sydmonton and Bishops Green Parish Council

My last newsletter to you was in February, and I have to say that I always prefer the mid-summer slots. The Henley Regatta and Royal Ascot are behind us, we are in the middle of Wimbledon, and we have Glorious Goodwood and the Ashes Test matches to look forward to, what could be better?

This is also a good time to reflect on what the Parish Council has achieved, and also to focus on its aims and aspirations for the months ahead. The latest Parish Council meeting took place on 8 July.

There is continual hopeful news re Superfast Broadband and following the current work being carried out at Bishops Green it seems that there is a real possibility of being offered this by the end of the year. Whether you actually want your bills arriving that much quicker is another question! A seminar arranged in July by our MP, Kit Malthouse, will hopefully provide further information.

We continue to monitor the condition of Highways, Bridleways and Footpaths to ensure that the relevant parties are informed of potential problems. We are currently involved in discussions with HCC in an attempt to have a local bridleway possibly re-routed because of protruding tree roots. We work on the basis that whilst these issues are sometimes difficult to resolve they must nevertheless be tackled in the interest of the safety of all using the routes. What can I say about the condition of the road surface outside of St Lawrence Church? The recent work appears to have made the situation worse, and you have my personal guarantee that all is being done to rectify the problem.

Anyone who regularly uses the Ecchinswell Village Hall car park will be only too well aware that the entrance desperately needs attention. You will therefore be pleased to learn that we are in discussions with Basingstoke and Deane BC and the Village Hall committee to commit some money from the Community Infrastructure Fund for the necessary work. It will entail some careful planning in order to accommodate the various users e.g. school children, village hall users, weekend footballers, and the properties at the rear of the hall that use that part of the car park. We will be consulting with those most affected in due course but if you have any immediate views or suggestions please let us know via clerk@ecchinswell-pc.gov.uk

We are now in the process of finalising the future task of the Parish Lengthsman which as you will recall is a scheme where we are funded by HCC to the tune of 50 hours per year. This may not seem much in the scheme of things, but it does enable us to maintain and improve the village environment by:- Clearing ditches, Keeping road signs visible, Maintaining Notice Boards and carrying out routine Highways tasks. Again if you would like to suggest additional task please let us know.

Discussions are ongoing with the Primary School as to how we could contribute to a scheme for bulb planting to help create greater awareness of environmental issues. More news on this after the summer break, but once again your ideas would be most welcome.

Finally I would just like to remind you that this is the time of year when Power tools, Strimmers, Hedge cutters, barbeques etc are extremely attractive to the light fingered. Please be sure not to leave anything out overnight and ensure all sheds and garages are securely locked.

Have a good summer

Michael Sparrow