

Chairmans Report May 2009

Traffic – its speed and quantity - continues to be at the top of your Parish councils list of priorities. The Parish Council has continued to campaign for permission to install vehicle activation signs at each end of the village and I had hoped by now you would have seen the fruits of some of our labours. Finally in February 2009 the Parish Council got approval from the County Council to install the signs and these are currently on order and will be placed in Earls Barton Road and along The Ridge. County Councillor Blackwell had kindly donated funding from his empowering councillors money towards the purchase of the signs. Due to the number of the accidents between Great Doddington and Earls Barton in recent years the County Council made a decision to designate this stretch of road a 'red route'. This has resulted in a reduction in speed to 30 and 40 mph. Weight restriction signs have also been placed at the top of Hardwater Road, which has in recent months seen an increasing number of lorries trying to cut through to Scot Bader at Wollaston, having missed the turning off the A45. The Parish Council has suggested improved signage on the A45 to prevent this continuing to happen.

The Parish Council has also managed to keep its precept funding at £22,000 for the next financial year, being mindful of maintaining standards within Great Doddington and taking into account expected rises in costs for electricity, we are hopeful that by being prudent this funding will be sufficient. In common with other areas we shall be looking at making your village a 'greener' and more responsible user of energy.

Question: Would you be prepared to have some street lights turned off after midnight or 1a.m.?

After many years of requesting safety lining at the School, the County Council had programmed it for completion in the last financial year. The colour of the lining has changed from white to primrose and had not been completed before the end of March..... although it is hopeful that this will be done shortly. I note I made reference to this 12 months ago and the wait from your county council goes on....

Following some consultation and good work by a parishioner, we may be able to secure a pedestrian crossing near the shop. This may help to slow traffic in the centre of the village and make a safer location for children and others to cross to the shop.

Question: Would you support the installation of a pedestrian crossing?

The Gardening Team continue to do a wonderful job, although, due to the 'credit crunch', have lost some of their funding from Wyevale. The crab apple tree has been removed from the Amenity Garden and the stump is now an owl. A replacement tree will be planted. They also held a plant sale, last Saturday to

funds. The metal seats have been removed and replaced with a wooden bench which has been purchased from a donation by Councillor Barry Graves from his Ward Support monies

Following recommendations under Health and Safety the Parish Council have looked at headstones in the Cemetery. It was thought that a few of the older headstones needed attention and correspondence was sent to the owners shown on the deeds register. Unfortunately no responses to these had been received. A decision had been made not to 'band' the headstones but the risk will continue to be monitored and if deemed necessary the headstones will be laid flat.

As many of you will be aware there have been ongoing problems with the current website and the host company. A decision has recently been made to change the host company and refresh the website and it hoped that this will be live shortly and will then be added to on a regular basis with minutes etc. I hope you will all visit www.greatdoddington.com to keep up to date with events and news within the village. We would be pleased to hear your views, and any ideas to further enhance the site.

I accepted, with regret, the resignation of long-standing parish councillor, Julia Richardson earlier in the year. Julia was a great all rounder, but particularly vigilant and liaised with the local police to keep Great Doddington as much of a crime free zone as possible. She will be missed at meetings for her continual enthusiasm.

We must all be grateful to a small number of people who make special efforts to keep the village looking tidy - you know who you are and we thank you. Please can everybody assist with the issues of litter and dog messing to continue to make Gt. Doddington a special place to live.

As always, my thanks go to all my fellow parish councillors for their support and help throughout the year.

Ian Bowers