

## Chairman's Report May 2011

As I write this report the thermometer on the wall outside reads 22C (72F), the sun is out and it is a beautiful spring day. It seems a long time since the snow and freezing temperatures of December and January. However not all of us are happy, as I'm guessing the gardeners and allotments holders (and farmers!) amongst us are really wanting a shower (or an inch or two) of rain.

This rather illustrates a difference in outlook between some of us – Is your glass half empty or half full? Are you an optimist or pessimist? These differences are often apparent when dealing with things on the PC.

The nominations for the Parish Council have closed and we had 8 nominations who were therefore elected uncontested. The Parish Council therefore did not have the costs of an election but we can co-opt one more person on after May, so if anyone wishes to help serve the village, please get in touch with one of us. Optimists needed!

Each year we have to set the parish precept, which is the amount of money passed directly to the PC from The Borough Council of Wellingborough, to enable us to finance our expenditure. It is funded through the Council Tax. For a number of years we have kept our precept at £22,000 and through careful management we have decided to do the same again. Realists required to weigh the pros and cons of various projects etc!

We do have, on the horizon, some large items to fund. Your PC owns and maintains 100 street lights within the village and due to their age a large number have to have bulbs and fittings replaced due to the bulbs being of the mercury vapour type. In addition we have been told by Central Networks that work is being planned for the next stage of the removal of overhead electricity wires, from the bottom of Church Lane to The Stags Head. This is great from the point of view of the village street scene but involves some cost to us in the renewal of more lamps.

Unfortunately the village youth club that was started in conjunction with Wilby has not continued, but the Scout group is running well and I urge any youngsters wanting to take part to contact Kris Roberts on [krisroberts@hotmail.com](mailto:krisroberts@hotmail.com)

The village gardening team will soon be preparing and installing the hanging baskets, and would be most grateful to receive some assistance in preparing and then watering them. Can you do the one outside your house or maybe the nearest one to you?

The absence of swings in the recreation ground has, quite rightly, created quite a stir and I know some of you are concerned about them. Wicksteed carried out the annual inspection, removed the swings, and informed us we had a repair and renewal estimate of over £2000. Your PC was unhappy with this and has obtained 2 other reports, both confirming our view

that this was unnecessary and 'over the top'. At last we have resolved the matter and hope to have the swings back to full working order very soon. We have saved money by looking closely at how we spend the precept on matters such as this, and so helped everyone with this sort of action. However it does take time. Swings and roundabouts – you might say!

You may have read about some alterations to bus routes in the county. Our understanding is that the bus route is not being closed, but simply changing from number 38 to X47. I hope this turns out to be correct as the provision of buses in the village is vital for so many people.

The saga of the pigs continues! Either side of Christmas the 2 sows between them produced 16 healthy and fast growing piglets who consume pig feed and left over food scraps as fast as we can provide them. They have been extremely hard work, as evidenced by the day not long ago, when having arrived back from abroad at 5am I had just got into bed when a phone call informed me that Perky was on the High Street by the bus stop! Sure enough a rattling bucket of food soon attracted her back home. You certainly need a sense of humour at that time of the day! Perky even became a film star when a video of her becoming a cartoon super hero was put onto facebook!

It is customary at this time of year for me to thank all those who serve on the PC and I am pleased to do so again, and I remind all of you that we are always happy to receive your views either in person at our monthly meetings or by any other form of contact.

Have a good summer- although I hope we get some rain soon!

Ian Bowers