

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - NOVEMBER 2010

Your Parish Council, along with every other tier of Government (both local and national), are looking at ways of saving money and keeping a lid on the Parish precept (This is the money we request from the Borough Council and forms a part of the Council Tax) At the present time we do not know what impact the Government Spending Review will have, if any, on the precept and our future request, suffice to say, we will endeavour to keep our expenditure down. Some costs (electricity, insurance, repairs of a H & S nature etc.) are to some extent outside our control. However, others such as grass mowing, repairs and upkeep of an aesthetic type and other maintenance of open spaces are more down to choice. We will continue to try to find the right balance. **How do you feel about the appearance of the village?** Do you feel we should have everywhere immaculate with no expense spared, or do you think we should leave some grass verges etc. to grow with fewer cuts? Anyone wishing to help should contact one of the parish councilors and we will put you in touch with the gardening team.

The introduction of the vehicle activated signs has continued to be the subject of much comment. One point I should like to make is this. If you see the signs flash do not assume they are having no effect, as the driver may well be reminded to slow down – after all this is their very purpose! The signs obviously have no effect on the volume of traffic passing through the village, and I fear this area of traffic control will be severely hampered in the near future by those budget cuts at the County Council. As a result of the latest Police community panel meeting, speeding in Gt Doddington is now an identified local priority, so officers from the team will be visiting the area on a regular basis to conduct speed checks with the handheld speed gun, and will be taking appropriate action against those caught exceeding the limit or those who are breaking further traffic offences. **You have been warned!**

We are trying hard to ensure that the salt bins are in place and replete prior to the winter, although I fear for the situation later on as the gritters were seen out last week!

We were pleased to hear about the starting, or perhaps it should be restarting, of a scout group in the village. Anyone interested should contact Kris Roberts on krisroberts@hotmail.com

We have had a meeting with the body responsible for affordable housing. The PC is very positive about this, as it seems so are many of you as the team were very pleasantly surprised by the near record number of replies to the questionnaire which was circulated in the village recently. We intend to pursue this with interest, as long as it does not become a victim of the spending cuts. Your PC is keen to see a provision of housing in the village to meet all requirements.

We have had a quieter 6 months on the PC so to end on a lighter note a story quite close to home as my daughter has 2 pigs.

A farmer decides that his 2 sows should be bred, and contacts his friend down the road, who owns 2 male pigs. They agree on a stud fee, and the farmer puts the sows in his pickup and brings them down the road to the males. He leaves them all day, and when he picks them up that night, asks the man how he can tell if they 'took' or not. The breeder replies that if, the next morning, the sows were grazing on grass, they were pregnant, but if they were rolling in

the mud as usual, they probably weren't ...

Comes the morn, the sows are rolling in the mud as usual, so the farmer puts them in the truck and brings them back for a second full day of frolic. This continues for a week, since each morning the sows are rolling in the mud.

About the sixth day, the farmer wakes up and tells his wife, "I don't have the heart to look again. This is getting ridiculous, AND expensive. You check today." With that, the wife peeks out the bedroom window and starts to laugh.

"What is it?" asks the farmer excitedly. "Are they grazing at last?"

"Nope." says the wife. "One of them is jumping up and down in the back of your truck, and the other one is honking the horn!"

We hope that on Christmas day we shall be celebrating some new arrivals, and I hope you all get what you wish for Christmas as well, and have a Happy New Year.

Please remember you are always welcome at Parish Council meetings which are held in the Chapel Rooms in Chapel Lane commencing at 7.30pm on the first Wednesday of every month except August.

Ian Bowers