

## **Council Matters – May 2011**

By the time this is published we will have had the local elections and the referendum on the Alternative Vote. It might be that I am no longer your Councillor and if that is the case then I would like to say how much I have enjoyed representing you. If, on the other hand, I have been successful then I look forward to serving everyone for a further four years.

One of the biggest problems in our community is the issue of litter. What a great shame it is that our lovely surroundings are blighted by the actions of a few selfish people. The main culprits would appear to be motorists and their passengers who deposit rubbish through their vehicle windows and the others are the ones who engage in fly tipping.

Nowhere is the blight of litter more evident than on the A45. Not only is it unsightly but is also costly. The council recently carried out a deep clean which involved closing sections of the road and working through the night at a cost £15,000, money that could have been used on other services.

Fly tipping is the illegal dumping of waste. It can be anything from domestic items such as fridges, sofas and mattresses to garden waste, tyres and construction waste. It can occur anywhere at any time. We know that there are several well used sites for dumping but anywhere on the edge of the village can be fair game. Once again the cost of cleaning up this unwanted rubbish is very expensive. In Northamptonshire, around 1,000 incidents of flytipping are reported to Councils every month and it is estimated that the clean up bill costs the County in excess of £650,000 a year - a bill that ends up being picked up by householders through Council Tax.

What people do not realise is that Flytipping can carry a fine of up to £50,000 and/or six months imprisonment and any incidences that are witnessed should be reported to Customer Services at Wellingborough Council.. For your own safety you should not approach or challenge those responsible but obtain as much information as possible about what was dumped, when and by what type of vehicle.

### **Council's one stop shop open for business**

Wellingborough Council has launched a 'one stop shop' in the town centre, meaning that customers can now access a wide range of services all in one place.

As well as offering a number of council services - such as benefits, housing, planning advice, environmental health, customer services and much more - the one stop shop also gives people the chance to get debt advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), and speak to experts from HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) about tax credits, child benefit, and self assessment.

The one stop shop operates out of the council's Tith Barn Road offices and features several desks with computers and telephones. Customers can access the planning portal and council website, and a list of phone numbers is available on each desk for people to contact relevant officers, who will come and meet them in person if necessary. Booths are available for private conversations.

To find out more, or to make an appointment, people should contact customer services on 01933 229 777.

## **New Play area opens in Croyland Gardens**

A new play area for children under 7 was officially opened on 2 April. The theme is zoo based to recall the town zoo that was on the site between the 1940's to 1970's.

The play area features huge boulders which are engraved with designs from local children and reflect the zoo theme. A competition was open to all children living in Wellingborough under the age of 7 years to design an image to go on one of the boulders or stepping stones, and 28 designs were chosen.

There are also a range of activity games and some quite noisy "whoopie cushions". From what I saw recently the play area is certainly being well used and should prove to be a popular addition for parents and children.