

A Note From The Parish Chair

First of all this quarter I would like to thank the hordes (both of you) who expressed concern over the bout of Kangaroo flu I was suffering from the last time I wrote, some six months ago. I have now recovered from that but unfortunately am now stricken by another form of alien species sniffles. This time it's Fly Flue. I suppose it was only a matter of time before the invertibrates got in on the act. It's not quite so severe as the first flew - in fact Fly floo gives you quite a buzz, however the down side of is that you can't pass a cow-pat by without feeling a strong urge to thrust your face in it.

Currently youth, booze and bother levels are lower. They are not illiminated and won't be unless we somehow slip back into the fifties when we didn't have three thousand people in the Parish and parents spent time at home as well as work. Last time we were here the survey into the needs of our young folk was in progress. People who know about these things said that as a consequence of the results of the survey we should set up an intergenerational group and a cross-border group. The intergenerational group is intended to be ongoing as a means of consulting with teenagers. The cross-border group, including representatives of Scotter PC, Messingham PC, Kirton PC, LCC, NLC, and WLDC, is intended to seek an overarching holistic approach towards youth activity as kids from all three Parishes interact and socialise across the borders. There aren't the man-hours available at parish level to tackle the problem and, in order to address this, officers of WLDC have successfully identified and applied for funding from the Local Strategic Partnership to employ a temporary part time youth development officer. WLDC themselves and PC will also contribute to this one year appointment. Let's hope that at some stage the £10,000 on the survey and £20,000 on the youth development worker will result in something we can see.

I've recently had to start wearing glasses for reading and computer work and they sit on the end of what the Chunky Wench calls my beak as we speak. However will you all please note that this does not make me Harry Potter. The Parish Council has only limited powers, mostly in the form of lobbying, and magic is not amongst them.

I can report progress on the final part of the Parish Plan. The Playing Fields committee has been plugging away since the action plan was produced to try and finish this last segment. The reality is we've hardly achieved anything so far. The advent of the Olympics and the affluent nature of the Parish mean that funds are hard to come by. Those of you who haven't recently arrived in the district in order to get your kids into the Grammar school will recall that, with funds from the Parish precept, WLDC and LCC, the playing fields committee purchased some additional land adjacent to the existing fields. Parish council also funded a £2,000 survey of the new area to ascertain what was needed to convert it and the cost thereof. The plan for the field is to convert the old tennis courts into a multi use games area, put new tennis courts behind the bowling green and level/seed the new ground for a couple more footy pitches and general recreation. Sounds dead simple if you say it quick. It's not. The big funds that we've been going for just don't want to know and have a multitude of organisations after their funds. There are three large playing field schemes within a few miles of us, mega numbers over the whole country. We're trying a different approach now in the shape of bite-size. Our first bite-size is £10,000 from Mond-

green of which 11% is coming from the Parish precept, ie your rates. This chunk will be used to drain the new area of land, construct another set of steps from the village hall car park down to the field, provide some additional benches round the existing field and some goals for the new one. Scotter Junior Football Club has recently replaced their floodlighting and are hoping to add to them in the near future. A combination of Tennis Club's own funds and PC funds should be sufficient to pay for the sub-base of the new courts. This should mean there should be something concrete to see over the next few months.

For twenty years (ie since she was 40) a particular lady has been trying to get replacement tennis courts. When we say playing fields has been applying for this that and the other it actually means she has. Her funding experience is as big as her enthusiasm and reserves of energy. It was she who initiated and drove through the Parish Plan in the first place. It's been suggested that there should be a bust somewhere about the village in her image but as yet we've been unable to find a lump of stone big enough. I'll keep you posted on that one, and next quarter I'll go through all the other actions to come out of the Parish Plan and where the funding came from.

I've also been asked to make it clear that the Village Hall, Playing Fields and Parish Council are all separate bodies with their own committees. I've resisted thus far as I know it will be a waste of time. It took me eight years and an awful lot of beer to persuade a drinking partner of mine to stop using the term Village Hall Playing Fields. I can't afford to convert all you lot.

Finally litter. There's a lot of it about. There seems to be an ever increasing amount of wind to distribute it. Still days seem to be a rarity – what's going on? Another issue that won't be returning to the way we think it was in the fifties regardless of what Harry Potter and his merry band do. At the APM we had a street warden address us on the subject. She was going to try and implement new regulations regarding the responsibilities of business owners. Unfortunately she has now left the building along with two of the other five street wardens at West Lindsey. There's a freeze on recruitment at the moment so we'll be lucky if one of the three missing wardens gets replaced. We are still trying to get a part time litter picker but have not yet been successful even though the funds are there. Further update next time.

And so ends this quarter's answer to the endlessly asked "What's the Parish Council Doing about it?" Python enthusiasts should read the question in a Mrs Cut-Out voice. I often get asked why I do this PC malarkey and the truth is I don't really know. The nearest I get to explaining it is when I have my usual yule-tide watch of the film Zulu. As the chaps with spears advance, a fearful young soldier asks of the Colour Sergeant "Why us, sir?" and gets the reply " Because we're here son, nobody else".

Chris Day