

Swaton Parish Council

Chairman's Report

Parish Council Year 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011

This year has seen the Parish Council remain the same with five Councillors and no resignations or co-options. As no further applications to join the Council were forthcoming at the time of re-election, your existing Councillors have been re-elected unopposed.

During the year your Council has seen to improvement in the quality of Grass Cutting and Litter Picking. Litter Bins have been fitted at each Bus Shelter and an empty property in West End tidied. These actions have improved the general tidiness of the Village which should hopefully take us further in the Best Kept Village contest in 2011. We are proud of our village and hope that residents will back us up on this by keeping verges and gardens as tidy as possible ! However, Fly tipping has reared it's head, with one instance of tyre dumping hitting the local News. This was quickly sorted out by our outstandingly efficient 'Rubbish Tsar' at NKDC, Nina Camm. She had people clearing the tyres within an hour of them being reported. Our village 'RubbishMeister', Henk, continues to monitor and clear village litter problems. Other credit for great service must go to Lincs County Council who had people out within 2 hours, on a Sunday, after a Manhole Cover was reported to be missing and thus dangerous. Anglian Water were not as efficient after a water leak was reported in High Street and took over 2 weeks to fully repair it. Vandalism has not been such a problem, this year, although Bus Shelter roof tiles have been dislodged - possibly by football players.

Council Members have regularly attended NKDC 'Cluster' meetings. These are where 13 Parish Councils get together to 'air their views' with NKDC. We have continued to make our presence known ! Cluster initiatives include a Rural Transport Survey being carried out. This will be acted upon when fully collated. An Affordable Housing Survey may also be carried out. Swaton was also instrumental in scrapping a Planning recommendation that building land in a small village like Swaton could ONLY be sold to someone living or working in the village.

Our Community Hut has benefited from Cluster funds by having electrical work carried out so that it can be used with a generator in the event of a long term electricity outage to provide heat, light and cooking facilities for members of the Community who may suffer without electricity. The Council has received £140 as a pre-payment for Insurance of Speed devises purchased by the Cluster. Your Councillors have objected strongly to NKDC's profligate spending on Consultants for yet another Sleaford Masterplan and to the exorbitant cost of a Playbus to travel the area. They have been listened to !

Dog fouling continues to be a problem in the village. Please clean up after your pet. Loose dogs have also caused problems and our local Police have had to be involved.

During 2010 after serious Post delivery problems, your Chairman attended a meeting at the Sleaford Sorting Office and after protracted heated discussions, secured assurances of improvements which now seem to have been made. He has a 'hotline' number for the Area Supervisor, should problems arise again.

Our Flood Wardens continue to do sterling work (No floods this year - Thanks Elaine & Liz !) Discussions continue with the Environment Agency and Black Sluice Drainage Board about works being done to avoid flooding. Councillors Deptford and Harborow along with Flood Warden Elaine Richardson went on a fascinating evening trip to see the workings of Black Sluice Drainage Board. Much was learned and helpful contacts made.

As a forward thinking Quality Council, we have been chosen to be the first place in the County to have a Energy and CO₂ efficient LED Footpath light fitted for evaluation purposes. Watch out for it (outside Councillor Dunlop's property) and let us have your views.

Our Village Newsletter continues to flourish with it's Editor's usual mixture of seriousness and humour. Thank You, Andy !

In all a successful year for the Council. Please contact any Councillor if you have concerns or feel that something needs to change. We will do our best to help.

Swaton Parish Council

Responsible Financial Officer's Report

Financial Year 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011

The Council started the year with £2525.83 in the Bank.

We received income of £2732.93. This came from NKDC for the Precept, S I D Insurance and Litter Picking, from LCC for Grasscutting and from NatWest for Bank Interest. This income also includes £90.64 reclaimed VAT.

We spent £2434.35 on running the Council and maintaining the village, this included paying our Clerk, Stationary, Postage, Insurance, Training, Subscriptions, Hut Rental and Grasscutting.

We finished the year with £2824.41 in the Bank. This shows a paper 'profit' of £298.52.

This 'profit' figure includes a £140.00 pre-payment from our Cluster (via NKDC) for future insurance costs incurred in insuring the Cluster's Speed Indicating equipment. Other money was saved due to slow Autumn grass growth and hence less grass cuts being required.

We actually budgeted to lose £865.00 - So are actually £1163.52 better off than expected due to efficiencies.

The £2824.41 is carried forward into the 2011 / 2012 year.

Within the Budget for the 2011/2012 year we have planned a potential loss of £1308.00 to bring Contingencies down to the recommended £700 for Staffing and General Costs plus Reserves of approx. 3 month's running costs. However, we were obliged (by law) to budget a potential £700.00 cost of Parish and Council Elections during the year. It has recently been confirmed that we will not incur these costs, so such a large 'loss' should not be forthcoming.