

# Swaton Parish Council

## Chairman's Report

Parish Council Year 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012

This year has seen the Parish Council remain the same with five Councillors, with no resignations or co-options. As there were no new applications to become Councillors at the time of the local elections, no elections were required. However, NKDC charged us £55.88 + VAT for the privilege of NOT having an election !

Swaton Parish Council has successfully applied for a re-accreditation of our status as a Quality Council. A great deal of work went into this application and many thanks must go to Shelagh, our Clerk, for this. Shelagh is also congratulated for becoming a 'Principal of the Institute of Local Council Managers'.

As we now have a relatively large number of young people in the village, the Council is actively trying to find a solution to their lack of facilities. A sub-committee has been formed and a once a week Youth evening in the Hut has been set up. Other activities are planned and 'The POD' which is NKDC's 'Activity Bus' has been organised to visit the village on 6 consecutive Thursdays from June 14th onwards from 3pm to 7pm.

We have re-established communications with 'The Crown', who own most of the land in the village, to try to find a suitable 'Play Area'. Discussions are on-going.

Council Members have regularly attended NKDC 'Cluster' meetings. These are where 13 Parish Councils get together to 'air their views' with NKDC. However due to NKDC spending cuts, these have now been abandoned and will only be re-instated on an ad hoc basis. One of the Cluster's final topics was the problem with the SID (Speed Indication Device). This had broken down and there was no money in the kitty to get it fixed. Swaton came to the rescue and after protracted negotiations with our local County Councillor (Cllr Barry Young) and the SID manufacturers, managed to get enough money out off Lincs County Council in the form of a 'Big Society' grant to have the old SID repaired AND buy a new heavily discounted one.

The Council have bought a new supply of sand for sand bag filling. If YOU would like to have some sandbags at your property, please contact Cllr Andy Dunlop.

Our village continues to be kept clear of litter by our tame Dutchman, Henk, who's recent Report on Litter problems has been held up as an prime example of Swaton's efficiency throughout Lincolnshire.

Unfortunately, though, our 'Best Kept Village' entry didn't quite make it through to the second round. No particularly bad remarks, but we were slightly let down by one or two of the empty properties in the village.

Due to National spending cuts, LCC have drastically cut our grant for grass cutting by almost 30%. This means that for 2013 we may have to change from our very efficient private contractor to one supplied by LCC.

Our Energy and CO<sub>2</sub> efficient LED Footpath light has been fitted (to the left of Cllr Dunlop's gate). This was supplied to evaluate its suitability for more general use throughout Lincolnshire. We have reported back that it is a success providing a better, wider light pattern with no 'backlight'.

The Queen's Jubilee will be celebrated with a Village Picnic - Details to follow.

Our Village Newsletter continues to flourish with its 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 2011 to 31st March 2012

The Council started the year with £2824.41 in the Bank.

We received income of £2595.58. This came from NKDC for the Precept and Litter Picking, from LCC for Grasscutting and from NatWest for Bank Interest. This income also includes £90.64 reclaimed VAT.

We spent £2697.48 on running the Council and maintaining the village, this included paying our Clerk, Stationary, Postage, Insurance, Training, Subscriptions, Hut Rental, Grasscutting and Litter Picking.

We finished the year with £2722.51 in the Bank. This shows a paper 'loss' of £101.90.

This 'loss' figure includes a one-off cost of £154.80 for Sand for renewing sandbags, a £60 charge for our successful Quality Council re-accreditation and a £67.06 charge by NKDC for NOT holding an election ! A 'profit' of £391.00 was made on grass cutting due to the dry Summer and less cuts being required.

We actually budgeted to lose £1308.00 as we HAD to budget for the full cost of Council Elections of £700.00 whether we had them or not - So we are actually £1206.10 better off than expected due to efficiencies and not actually holding an election.

The £2722.51 is carried forward into the 2012/2013 year.

Within the Budget for the 2012/2013 year we have planned a potential loss of £564.12 to bring Contingencies down to the recommended £700 for Staffing and General Costs plus Reserves of approx. 3 month's running costs. Unfortunately the potential loss on grass cutting (as mentioned in Chairman's Report and not apparent until after the Budget was agreed) may mean that we lose more than this.