

Swaton Parish Council

Chairman's Report

Parish Council Year 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014

This year has seen the Parish Council remain the same with five Councillors, with no resignations or co-options. We have however lost our Local District Councillor, Jim Cook. Jim, who never missed a Parish Council meeting, will be missed by all. His successor, Kate Cook (no relation - whatever rumours our Vice-Chairman has spread) promises to give us a similar service.

Our Play Area is now 'up on running'. A 25 year Lease has been signed, rent paid, area fenced and cleared and temporary goal and shelter provided. This has been jointly funded by Lincs County Council, The World Eggthrowing Federation, The Swaton Village Fund and money raised by the youth of the village. Stage Two which is the supply of more suitable play equipment is going ahead, hopefully with Lottery Funding. Many thanks must go to Cllr Liz Harborow, Cllr Andy Dunlop and their sub-committee of villagers for making this happen.

Flooding. The Parish Council would like to take full credit for the fact that there have been no floods since the last Report, but gracefully accept that the weather may have had something to do with this..... Meetings continue with Lincs County Council, The Environment Agency and Black Sluice Drainage Board to find a more permanent solution. However Red Tape is seriously holding up any decisions on what can be done. There is a budget of up to £125,000 available to Swaton. This, however, has to be justified by a very complicated 'Cost to Benefits' algorithm. The tree huggers among you may be pleased to know that up to £30,000 of this has been set aside to cater for the environmental requirements of newts, water voles and other useless creatures! Our very helpful Member of Parliament, Stephen Phillips, has recently been involved again and has brought our 'case' to the attention of the Secretary of State to try to cut some of this Red Tape and move things along.

Swaton now has a fully functioning LIVES First Responder group of 12 volunteers. 10 of these are now fully trained and should you have cause to call 999 for an Ambulance, then it is likely that a friendly local face will appear to help you before an Ambulance arrives. Anyone wishing to join the group and be trained as a Responder or just to be a helper, please call Andrew Deptford on 421111.

To complement this service an extra Defibrillator is planned to be sited on the external wall of the Hut. This will be available to all villagers and Hut and Church visitors. These machines are simple to use in the event of a Cardiac Arrest with verbal instructions emanating from within. Full training along with CPR training is planned for any villager wishing to learn more. The funding for this was raised from The Parish Council, The Parochial Church Council, The Swaton Vintage Day, The Hut Committee, The Swaton Village Fund and individual donations. I'm proud to say that we are a 'joined-up' village who get things done !

We thank Henk Buijs for his tireless (and mainly thankless) efforts in keeping the village free of rubbish. Henk's 'Rubbish Reports', are held up as a prime example of Swaton's efficiency throughout Lincolnshire. In recognition of this, Henk has been asked to present his Report to the prestigious Policy Review and Scrutiny Committee with delegates from throughout Lincolnshire attending.

The village's Neighbourhood Watch Scheme is being restarted. One Village Coordinator and three Area Coordinators have volunteered to revitalise this worthwhile Scheme which should keep you and your property safer AND knock up to 20% off your household insurance costs. Information will come through your letterbox soon.

A review of the village's footway lighting has been requested by a parishioner. If anyone has any strong views on this, please contact anyone on the Parish Council with your thoughts.

Our Village Newsletter continues (on a sporadic timescale) with its Editor's usual mixture of information 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 2013 to 31st March 2014

The Council started the year with £2466.18 in the Bank.

During the year we received an income of £17,922.31. £2587.30 of this came from NKDC for the Precept and Litter Picking, from LCC for Grasscutting and from NatWest for Bank Interest. This was used for the Councils normal running expenses.

The remainder, was involved with the Play Area set up, where money came from a temporary interest free private loan (needed to pay for fencing before the grant was received), money raised by the youth of the village, a Grant from Lincs County Council, a donation from The World Eggthrowing Federation, a donation from The Swaton Village Fund and VAT reclaimed.

The Swaton Village Fund which is administered by Cllr. Chris Richardson and ex Parish Chairman, Barry Jefferies, was set up many years ago to improve the lot of the children of Swaton and has received funds from fund raising events over the years and from The Swaton Vintage Day. The whole of this fund has now been transferred to Swaton Parish Council coffers for safe-keeping. At the date of this report £5492.62 is held 'on trust' by the Parish Council on behalf of The Swaton Village Fund.

Our expenditure for the year was £11804.97. We spent £2129.53 on running the Council and maintaining the village, this included paying our Clerk, Stationary, Postage, Insurance, Training, Subscriptions, Hut Rental, Grasscutting and Litter Picking. The remainder was spent on the Play Area including loan repayment, Planning Applications, Rent, Fencing and VAT paid.

We finished the year with £8583.52 in the Bank. With £5492.62 being held for the Swaton Village Fund, this leaves £3090.90 as the Parish Council's Reserves and Contingency fund. This Contingency fund is a Statutory Requirement.

This £8583.52 is carried forward into the 2014/2015 year.

Within the Budget for the 2014/2015 year we have planned a potential loss of £268.80 to bring the Reserves and Contingency fund down slightly. However we have been obligated to budget for potential costs of elections within the village in 2014/15 - which may not happen - and have thus had to increase the Precept from £2000 to £2200 for the year. However it should be noted that this has only risen by £200 since the Council was established in 2002.