

Good evening and welcome to your Parish Council's Annual Parish Meeting.

This evening you will hear from seven village organisations and from our District and County Councillors, all of whom will give a 5 minute talk about their areas of interest. After their presentations there will be a question and answer session, followed by refreshments and an opportunity for you to talk to any of our speakers.

As chairman of the Parish Council, I'd like to tell you what's concerned us most during the past year.

The Parish Council continues its efforts to tackle the problem of **HGV's** travelling inappropriately through the village, especially through Islington. We have been successful in our negotiations with Northants County Council Highways Department in that they have obtained a Traffic Regulation Order forbidding lorry parking along a stretch of road between the roundabout at the top of Thrapston (where it intersects with the Oundle Road), along Haldens Parkway and down to the bottom of Islington. These restrictions have only been imposed in the last few weeks, and we still need additional signage at the junction of Islington and Church Street to indicate the start of the Lorry Parking prohibited area. We are in touch with East Northants Council to ensure that their outside contractors, responsible for enforcing the parking regulations, monitor and penalise offenders who ignore this new parking restriction. In addition, NCC have installed new signage on the Oundle Road, coming up Plum Pudding Hill, indicating that all routes, including Haldens Parkway are 'straight on' and the left turn indicates 'Titchmarsh village only'. Lets hope this helps our problem.

At last the Parish Council's hopes of having **Affordable Housing** in the village are beginning to look more hopeful. Several sites have been identified and land owners are currently being contacted, with a view to securing an appropriate site.

It's been an eventful year with several projects being achieved.

Having been without a shop in the village for 10 years, **Titchmarsh Community Shop** was formally opened in September 2007 by no other than Alan Titchmarsh. I'm sure you'll agree what a joy it is to have a Shop again, I would like to thank everyone involved in supporting the Shop – and that's just about everybody isn't it? We will be hear more about how it's going from a representative shortly.

Towards the end of last year the Islington **allotments** were given a 'make over'. There are now 39 plots on the site that originally had 16. The plots are now smaller and more manageable and all 39 plots are now let. The new allotment holders are from Titchmarsh and from surrounding villages, and we have a waiting list, don't we Emma? As a new allotment holder myself, its so satisfying to see the enthusiasm and hard work, from young and old alike, that shows on every plot. We are looking to having a notice board at the allotments to allow us to communicate with our new tenants and to keep everyone in touch with each other.

Gina's project of having our own carved village sign has at last come to fruition. I am sure you agree that this adds style and a sense of belonging to the village. Even the moron who sprayed paint on the sign on the Shop opening day, could not spoil the beauty of the carving on the sign. I would like to thank Gina for her efforts completing the project, well done Gina.

As a result of Maggy Chapman's excellent fundraising efforts, she has been able to purchase 4 **planters** for the village, which are sited under the 'Titchmarsh' signs on the 4 entrances to the village. The Parish Council have agreed to take over legal responsibility for them, as we have for the carved village sign, all of which are now covered under our village insurance policy. The Planters look lovely and are an asset to the village – many thanks Maggy for making it happen.

The Parish Council's project of planting **daffodils**, along the verge from the Oundle Road into the village, continues and I think you'll agree what a spectacular display the daffodils make. This is an ongoing project and we will be looking for volunteers to plant more in October this year.

Coming up –

We have been advised by EON, our street lighting electricity suppliers, that they intend to put some of their **cables underground**. This means that their redundant poles will be removed – 7 of which carry our street lights. The area concerned is part of Islington, Church St around to the School, Chapel Street and North Street. There is a map at the back of the room showing which electricity poles are affected. This work is planned to start in June this year and the Parish Council are currently working with a contractor to arrange for replacement street lights to be erected.

**Village of the Year** competition. Last year we were runners up in the medium village and third overall village in Northamptonshire. Thank you all for keeping our village so neat and tidy and of course we have entered again – and we are hoping to win this year.

Finally I would like to thank all my fellow councillors, and Emma our clerk, for their support and enthusiasm over the last 12 months.

Thank you very much.

Michael Alderman  
Chairman  
May 2008