

Titchmarsh Times

A bi-monthly village newsletter sponsored by Titchmarsh Parish Council.

Village website www.titchmarsh.info

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August/September 2010

Titchmarsh Flower and Vegetable Show – Saturday 14th August 2010. You will be receiving this year's Show programme any time now and can then plan your entries! It's fun to enter and, as all exhibits are identified by number rather than name (the only entrants identified are those who come 1st, 2nd and 3rd in each Class), any embarrassment at not being placed is yours alone!

Your entry form, in the back of the programme, must be delivered to a committee member by Thursday 12th.

You need to take your exhibits to the Clubroom before 11am on Saturday morning, when the doors are closed for judging, and then just keep your fingers crossed!

The Show opens to the public at 2.30pm and during the afternoon you can not only admire the exhibits but also enjoy teas and ice creams, try your luck on the tombola and your skill at the skittles table. The presentation of trophies and prizes takes place at 4.30pm, followed by the raffle.

The end of the afternoon brings the 'Auction of Produce' which is a great opportunity to buy fresh, locally grown produce at amazing prices! Come along and enjoy a great afternoon.

Benefice Choir. The Benefice Choir was formed in 2008 to sing in the 7 churches of the Benefice. We rehearse for 1½ hours on the second Thursday of each month and sing for a service once every 6 to 8 weeks, when we typically sing Hymns, a Psalm and an Anthem; we also sing for Weddings.

When at full strength, the choir has 5 Sopranos, 5 Altos, 2 Tenors and 2 Basses. We are always on the lookout for new members, especially if you are a soprano, tenor or a bass. Interested? Of course you are! Contact David Buswell on 733737.

TOAwST Many thanks to the 45 attendees at the last TOAwST meeting for making it one of the best evenings we have had to date. The South American wines were interesting and somewhat illusive - especially wine produced in Uruguay!!!

Our next 'get together' is scheduled for Sept 24th, in the Clubroom at 8.00p.m. The focus might be a little challenging as we will be looking at two grape varieties – Gewurztraminer and Grenache!!!
Cheers, Jeff and Jo

Titchmarsh Folk Dance Club. The club held their annual charity dance on June 19th. It was an excellent evening of dance with Geoff Cubitt calling a variety of dances. He was ably backed by the music of Kellys Eye. A total of £350 was raised for FAIR (family action in our region).

Our next meeting will be in September. During the autumn there will be a variety of events including a bangers and mash supper dance, the Autumn Dance in October, Scottish night. Christmas dinner and a Christmas party to round the year off.

So lots of things happening. New members are always welcome. Why not come and have a go. First night free and we are a very sociable club. For further information contact George on 01933 622827.

Titchmarsh Village Fete 2010. Another successful year with good, although occasionally blustery, weather. In all we were able to distribute £4700 and £1700 went to the Church and £750 each to the Clubroom, Playing Fields, FOTS and Pre-School.

Thank you to everyone who helped with getting things ready, running a stall or clearing everything away.

Our thanks to Sir Ewan and Lady Harper who opened the gardens of Titchmarsh House, under the National Gardens Scheme, which contributed to the success of the day. Our thanks also to the Titchmarsh Folk Dancing Group, Northampton Fencing Club, Rushden Town Band and Gay Teese's Dog Agility Display all of which added to the special feel of the day and which along with the Parachuting Teddies makes our fete one of the most popular and successful around.

At the end of this year's fete two of the older marquees belonging to the village were auctioned off – raising £150. We have now purchased two new 10mx4m marquees. Just to remind you, the village has four 10mx4m marquees and one 12mx6m marquee available for hire at very reasonable rates and which can be borrowed free of charge by village organisations. Full details are available on the village website. www.titchmarsh.info

Next year's Fete will be on **Saturday, 11th June** . We look forward to seeing you there!

John Gaskin. John and Gina Gaskin would like to thank everyone who has asked after John's health following his heart attack on 28th June.

We were touched by the number of friends and villagers who rang or called to offer their best wishes. Whilst he has to go in hospital for a second procedure sometime in the next two months, he seems to be making a good recovery and is back to his old self.

The doctor said that his Merlot levels were rather high and we are working to reduce these.

200 Club Results

June Mr. A. Powell (7), M. Eyles (40), Mrs. Heafield (21), Mr. O. Thompson (47)

July Mr. & Mrs. M. Noakes (23), Mr. A. Duncombe (88), Mrs. S. Wilcox (115), Mrs. S. Shapland (109)

All the above won £10.00 each. Well done.

Caroline Hope

Sponsored Cycle Ride or Walk to be held on ***Saturday, 11th September***. This is an annual event promoted by the Historic Church's Trust, half of the funds collected will go to **Northamptonshire Historic Church's Trust** and half will go to Titchmarsh Church.

We have benefitted from a grant from Northamptonshire Historic Church's Trust in the past and would like to continue to support their efforts in maintaining the historic churches in Northamptonshire.

Last year we saw an increase in the number of people who supported this venture and we would like to see even more venture out on their bikes or walk to as many churches as possible this year. This is a rare opportunity to find many of the churches open. We can offer routes around the local benefice of 7 churches which avoid the main roads, or many other routes varying in distance and direction.

If like Alan Powell you fancy a real challenge you could do all the churches in the Oundle Deanery, he did this a number of years ago and had to start at 9.00 in the morning to arrive back at 6.00pm. Sponsor forms, route ideas and lists of participating churches will be in the shop or available from Julia Powell.

If you do not wish to actually walk or ride you are also able to man the desk at the church and get sponsorship for that; but if you can't do that then perhaps you would like to sponsor one of the participants.

Please put the date in your diary and get your bike (and/or legs) in preparation now.

Thank you for your support!!

Duncan Williams

Friends of Titchmarsh School. Well to start with I would like to thank the Village Fete Committee for running a successful village fete again this year which enabled us to be handed a cheque for £750. Thanks also go to all the parents and staff at the school for their help in manning the refreshment tent and for donations of cakes.

We have also managed to squeeze in a fashion show at the clubroom in July and again this was a success and the children learnt their dances quickly and performed magnificently. The children enjoyed doing it and we were well supported, as usual, by the village.

An event to look forward to will be a Barn Dance and Pig Roast being held on Saturday 18th September, between 6pm and 10pm. This event is open to everyone in the local area and will be held on the school playing fields. Tickets are **now on sale**, and will be priced at £10.00 for an adult, £5.00 for children between the ages of 5 and 18, and children aged 4 and under will be free. Last year was a great success and everyone is invited whether you have children at the school or not or no children at all! Let's hope for the same great weather as last year!

Please buy your tickets as soon as possible to enable us to have an idea of numbers; with the event being so close to the start of the new academic year. This is a family event so please come along and have a great time dancing and eating!

We will also be holding a raffle at the Barn Dance, with some great prizes including, Rushden & Diamonds tickets and signed program, tickets for Lazer Maze and Kids Play and a voucher for a free singing/music lesson, plus many more.

In October we will be having our annual Halloween party, and then we will be looking at events for Christmas; time flies when you're having fun! We also have a bags2school collection booked for November, so please start collecting those clothes!

Please support the school and you may find yourself enjoying raising money for the benefit of our children! Thank you for your continued support

Tracey Levick

Titchmarsh Babes. An opportunity for children from birth to school age together with their parents or carers to meet for play, craft, singing and a chat over a cup of tea/coffee. We meet every Monday (including school holidays but excluding bank holidays) in Titchmarsh Clubroom from 1.30-2.30pm for only £1 per family including drink and biscuits. We have toys for all ages, slide and trampoline, baby zone and a different craft to try each week. We are an informal friendly group; new people are always welcome so if you've never come along before, or just haven't been for a while we would love to see you there!

For the summer holidays we have planned some special events:

2nd August 1.30-2.30pm - JELLY BEANS MUSIC in the Clubroom. Free event for under 5's supported by Thrapston Children's Centre.

6th August 12.30pm – FAMILY PICNIC, Fermyn Woods Country Park. Meet in the play area.

23rd August 1.30-2.30pm - BALL MANIA in the Clubroom. Free event for under 5's supported by Thrapston Children's Centre.

You can find out more about us and check what's happening on our Facebook group page or call Judith Collini on 730587.

Safer Community Team Update. Good News!

From April to June 2010 there were 8 house burglaries reported and investigated by us that were committed on the East Northants North Safer Community Team area which includes Titchmarsh.. The same period in 2009, we investigated 22 crimes. This is a reduction of 14 crimes, a drop of 64%. For further information on crime data where you live, why not visit the Northants Police website www.northants.police.uk and click on the link 'Crime Mapping'.

Police helicopter activity

Northants Police have put their force helicopter to greater use over the past 12 months. If you spot the helicopter over Titchmarsh or a neighbouring town or village & wonder what the situation was then wonder no more as the force website is updated daily. www.northants.police.uk and click on 'Police helicopter Activity'.

August Holidays

Try to ensure your home looks occupied when you are out or on holiday

- Use automatic timer switches to turn lights on when it gets dark
- Cut the lawn and trim back any plants that burglars could hide behind
- Remember to lock all external doors and windows.
- Relax & enjoy your holiday or short break

Tim Butter. Northamptonshire Police

Titchmarsh Pre-School. A huge thank you to everyone who has supported the Pre-school this year. In particular we would like to thank the Village fete committee for their generous donation for which we are very grateful. We would like to also thank all those who gave for our bags2school earlier this year as we have just received a cheque for £252.00 which is great. We hope that you will continue to support us at our forthcoming events and we are in the process of finalising next academic year's events but we are proposing the following.

Our annual Xmas Bazaar 27th November 2010, a family Bingo night on the 16th October, and a Wreath night on the 13th December. These dates will be confirmed in the next edition.

The Pre-School AGM will be held on 23rd September 2010 at the Clubroom where we look forward to welcoming new committee members to help manage the Pre School. Please come along if you wish to know what we have been doing this year and what our plans are for the new school year.

We have had a busy year and the staff at the Pre-School have as always worked hard in providing the children with a safe and stimulating environment. We have been able to add to the toys and equipment for the children this year and hope to continue to develop what is now a thriving and successful pre-school.

Due to an increase in attendance figures, we already have 36 children registered for September onward, the Pre-School have recently recruited a new member of staff and would like to welcome Mrs Sue Bonar to the school from September as a part time assistant.

We would like to wish all our children and parents and carers a safe and enjoyable summer break and look forward to seeing them all at the start of the school year on Monday 6th September 2010.
Tracey Levick

PCC. Firstly Jackie Rowe and Anita Dunn would like to thank everyone who gave a donation to the Church in lieu of giving them birthday presents and the PCC would like to add their thanks for the generosity of all concerned.

Even though it is still in the summer we are making preparations for the Harvest Festival. The service will be at 11.30am followed by lunch in the Clubroom at 1.00pm. This year we will be doing hotpot and red cabbage followed by apple pie and cream. There will be a vegetarian option and various types of apple pie and tarts. There will be a bar and soft drinks. The afternoon will be finished off with an auction of the produce grown in the garden or cooked in the kitchen. All produce can be taken to the Church on Saturday morning or to the service on Sunday or directly to the Clubroom at lunchtime. The cost this year remains at £7.50 for adults and £3 for children under 16.

We are able to obtain booklets detailing most of the inscriptions on the memorials in the graveyard, and this has taken 3 years in the making and can be purchased for £3.50. This is a must have if you are interested in Titchmarsh history. Jean Bussens has a copy and will take orders if you are interested.

For any information contact anyone on the PCC, Jean Bussens, Stephen Barber, Julia Powell, Mary Cheney, Anita Dunn, Lady Harper, Sharon Bell, Karen Williams and Peter James.

Shape up and slim class in your area! We offer a weigh-in and a fun and motivational aerobic workout along with a full body toning session with a regular healthy eating plan. New to class is my FAT BUSTER plan you can lose up to 7lbs in two weeks.

If you are interested contact Sharon on 01933 226813 or 07712835088

Web: www.shapeupandslimwithsharon.com Email: shapeupandslim@googlemail.com

Titchmarsh School. In some ways the academic year has flown by. We have filled it with lots of enjoyable activities many of which have been of an international theme as we resubmit our application for the International School Award.

Nobody can have missed the very exciting building project which is now taking place at school. After much anticipation work began on 21st June and continued, despite cuts to other school projects and we hope it will be completed at the end of November. We now look forward to the challenges that the next academic year will bring, including moving into our new building, hot school meals, reapplying for our ECO Green flag and much more.

All that is left for me to say is thank you for your continued support and encouragement. Have a relaxing summer! School will open at 8.50am on Monday 6th September

Mrs J. Milton. Headteacher

Ballet Classes. *Weekly ballet classes in Titchmarsh starting September 2010!*

For girls and boys 3 years + Qualified classical dance teacher with many years experience of teaching ballet to all ages.

For more details please call Vanessa on 720664 or 07765 407323 or email me on justbuzoff@btinternet.com

Titchmarsh Gardening Club. Please note that following our successful event last year we have a provisional date for another **Green Wellys Gardeners Question Time** with Johnnie Amos.

The date is Wednesday, 29th September 2010 and the venue is the Pavilion. Further details will be available on posters and flyers in the not too distant future.

We do hope you will support this event which is to raise funds for various village projects with a horticultural theme.

May I also take this opportunity to thank everyone for their kind thoughts and good wishes during and following my recent illness, thank you all.

Pauline Ash

Titchmarsh Youth Group. We have now finished Youth Club for this school year. The next session will be on **Friday 10th September 7pm-9pm.**

Can I remind all current members that the £10 yearly membership will be due at the beginning of next term. Youth Club fees will remain the same at £2 for the two hour sessions. For new members in Year 7 or above, can you ensure that a parent/carer attends with you at the first session for completion of the relevant forms. Also for current members, if there are any changes to contact numbers, can you please make sure you let us know. The membership form can be downloaded from www.titchmarsh.info website or please contact Sue Shapland on 734467 or Julie Ray on 720308. Alternatively, forms will be available at TYG.

If any adult would like to become involved with the youth group as a supervisor please contact Sue Shapland. We had our AGM on the 16th July and the committee remained the same as last year. If the youth club is to continue we do need to look to the future and encourage alternative and new adult involvement. It would be a shame for our next generation to miss out in attending the youth club because of lack of adult supervisors. We have a fantastic group of young people in this village who are always polite and considerate. Therefore if anyone is interested and just wants to pop in on a Friday to see how the youth club operates, please contact Sue or Julie.

From the Rectory

<http://www.oundledeanery.org.uk/parishes/titchmarsh>

Chairs in memory of loved ones

Early in the process of thinking about new seating it was suggested that this could be a good way of remembering individuals who have had a place in the community – or who have been significant to us individually.

After extensive research we have now been able to order over 100 new chairs specially suited to Titchmarsh Church. If you would like to donate one (or more) in memory of loved ones we can arrange a suitable plaque if you would be willing to donate £125 (or £100 if you sign a gift aid form) payable to Titchmarsh PCC c/o the treasurer, Julia Powell 10 Church St. Sample chairs and leaflets giving more information can be found in church. We have deliberately decided on a mix of wooden and upholstered backs but all the chairs will have matching dark blue upholstered seats.

With all good wishes Jim Mynors

60 Main St. Aldwinckle. Tele: 720613 (Day off Friday) Jim@Mynors.me.uk

From the registers

John Marriott has added some notes to amplify this item in the last edition

Alec Ray Lived his entire life in Titchmarsh. He attended the village school and was confirmed at St Mary's Church. He was church warden for many years. Alec married Betty in 1957 and they raised their two sons here. Alec was a quiet unassuming man, affectionately known as Alec-trician. He was a devoted family man who had a great love for Titchmarsh and St Mary's Church.

Steve Wesley moved to Chapel St with his wife Peggy 24 years ago They quickly settled into village life. Steve's keen interest in the village community and St Mary's Church continued until he died in Polebrook nursing home. He was a warm, sociable character. Steve will perhaps best be remembered as the quintessential English gentleman riding his vintage bicycle to the village shop.

Alice (Midge) Chapman of 12 Dryden's Close died on 8th June aged 84. her funeral was on June 16th

Baptism

Freddie Bull (son of Richard Bull and Kim Jefferies) was baptised in Titchmarsh on 25th July

Titchmarsh Church Services

- August 1 9.15 Morning prayer
- August 8 9.15am Communion & **No Family Service**
- August 15 9.15am Communion
- August 22 9.15am Communion
- August 29 9.15am Communion
- September 5 9.15 Morning prayer
- September 12 9.15am Communion & 4.30pm Family Service
- September 19 9.15am Communion
- September 26 9.15am Communion
- Details of other services on noticeboards

Church Rotas for August and September 2010

Date	Flowers	Time	Sidesmen	Readers
1 st August 2010	Mrs S Hankins	9.15am	Mr J Fieldsend	Mrs J Powell & Mr J Fieldsend
8 th August 2010	Mrs W Jeffries	9.15am	Mrs A Powell	Mrs J Powell
		4.30pm	No Service	
15 th August 2010	Mrs G Gaskin	9.15am	Lady Harper	Sir Ewan Harper
22 nd August 2010	Miss J Finlayson	9.15am	Mrs J Fieldsend	Mr J Fieldsend
29 th August 2010	Mrs S Prestwich	9.15am	Mr P Dunn	Mr T Higgins
5 th September 2010	Mrs M Cranch	9.15am	Mr A Powell	Mr J Fieldsend & Mrs J Powell
12 th September 2010	Mrs A Dunn	9.15am		Mrs J Bussens
		4.30pm	Knight family	Jessica Knight
19 th September 2010	Mrs S Wilcox	9.15am	Dr S Bell	Dr G Webster
26 th September 2010	Mrs R Franklin	9.15am	Lady Harper	Sir Ewan Harper
Harvest 3 rd October 2010	Mrs S Holland	11.30am	Mrs J Fieldsend	Mr S Barber

Playing Field Committee.

Midsummer Music. The committee would like to pass on its grateful thanks to everyone who made the Midsummer Music evening such a great success. Yes, the weather could have been a bit kinder but the chilly conditions did little to dampen the mood. If anything they only served to promote the cosy atmosphere enjoyed by the more than 100 people who attended the event.

The live band, *Cellar V*, were also a big hit - especially if the number of people jigging around on the dance floor was anything to go by! Perhaps they were they just trying to keep warm? Either way, we've already booked them again.

For various reasons, however, the 2011 event will likely take place a little later in the year, probably early to mid July, just before the schools break up for the summer hols.

Street Quiz. Although Titchmarsh has a reputation for being a very friendly village there are some neighbours who only ever see each other when they pass in the street. The Street Quiz was devised as a way of bringing those people together around the same table for an evening of fun and banter.

This year's Street Quiz will be held in the Village Hall on **September 11th**. Chapel Street, the current holders of the cup, will be hoping to become the first team to retain the trophy. Indeed, since the event began, no one street has ever won the cup twice. Perhaps you can make the difference?

So, if you're invited to join a team this year - and you probably will be - please don't miss the opportunity to take part in one of the most fun-filled events on the Titchmarsh calendar.

Remember, *your street needs you!*

Playing Field Work. Later this year the committee will put into action its long-held plan to level the top football pitch. This will involve earth works on a fairly grand scale. We realise this will inconvenience the many dog walkers who frequent the area but would ask them to remain mindful of the work being undertaken and avoid walking across the site if at all possible.

AGM Finally, at our recent AGM Gina Gaskin was once again encouraged to continue in her role as Chair - as was Treasurer, Mel Chapman. The two new appointments are Antar Howarth, who is the new Vice Chair, and Richard Hughes who takes over as Secretary from Debs Maxwell who has just given birth to baby Phoebe!

Antar Howarth. info@perchpolemedia.com

Parish Council.

Affordable Housing. The development of the Affordable Housing scheme in Tofts Close has yet to be given formal go ahead due to the ownership of a Ransom Strip adjoining the land. It was assumed that the seller (Merchant Venturers) owned the wall at the entrance to the development. This is in fact owned by East Northamptonshire Council. At the finance sub-committee on the 28th June of ENC it was agreed not to sell the land to the Northamptonshire Rural Housing Association because they believed its commercial value would not be fully realised in the current economic climate. For full details and background information visit the Current Affairs section on the Titchmarsh website

Conservation Area. Following the recent review it has been confirmed that specific areas of Titchmarsh have been designated a Conservation Area. ENC has formally written to parishioners affected to advise them of the designation. For further information, visit the Parish Council area on the Titchmarsh website.

Re-siting of the Thrapston Cattle Market. The re-siting of Thrapston Cattle market has been a long held objective of East Northants Council. The preferred site for the re-location is on land adjoining the Primark Distribution facility (ex IKEA) on Huntingdon Rd. A supermarket chain has now shown interest in the current Cattle Market site which will provide the funds for the re-location. A representative from Bletsoe's addressed the Parish Council on 17th June outlining the desire to develop the land already owned by Bletsoe with the addition of land currently owned by the Diocesan Board of Finance into an agricultural centre including market, offices, and related sales and support businesses. A summary of the discussion that took place between David Bletsoe and the Parish Council is available on the website.

Horse Manure in the village. A gentle request to riders who exercise their horses through the village, Not so long ago the site of steaming horse manure resulted in enthusiastic gardeners racing to collect it for use in vegetable and flower beds. Whilst it is not possible to potty-train horses, not is it practical for owners to carry with them a garden spade and dustbin to collect the manure as it is dropped, it would be appreciated if riders could try and avoid instances of manure being dropped on verges and pavements where it could cause a hazard to young children and problems with cutting the grass.

Titchmarsh website. The website is a community resource, and is regularly updated to allow people to keep up to date with what is going on in the village. Some areas, however are looking a little dated, If you would like to refresh areas of the website that refer to your business, club, or organisation, then please forwards any amends to Geoff Love at geoff_love@dennis.co.uk

Clubroom.

CCP Summer Playdays. The school holiday events organised by Cultural Community Partnerships and hosted by the Parish Council in the Clubroom have proved very successful over the last 5 years, indeed Titchmarsh is the best attended of any of the Playdays run locally. It is therefore with real regret that we have found out about a decision taken by Mr Roger Lovesay, Head of Strategy & Business Development for CCP to cancel the booking for Titchmarsh for the summer holiday sessions.

This decision has come about as a result of Mr. Lovesay overturning an agreement made by a member of his staff to recompense the Clubroom for some excess cleaning charges relating to a Playday session held at Easter (a total of £44 to hand scrub the hall's floor to remove black scuff marks).

I can only apologise on behalf of the Clubroom Committee for the outcome of this situation, the extent of which was only realised when the Parish Council chased CCP for the publicity material to promote the summer dates to be informed that Titchmarsh was no longer on the schedule.

Unfortunately the real losers from this decision are the children who support these Playdays in such numbers and their parents who appreciate a few half days of supervised activities for their off-spring during the school holidays.

Parking – a resident of the High Street has brought to the attention of the Committee that inconsiderate parking can cause unnecessary obstruction and congestion at busy events in the Clubroom and at Pre-school drop-off and collection times. Could I ask all Clubroom users and organisers of events to please be aware of how and where they park and to do so with consideration for other road users? Thank you.

Caretaker – I'm pleased to announce that after several months of voluntarily covering the role, John Fieldsend has agreed to take on the role of Caretaker of the Clubroom on a formal and permanent basis. As our charity status prevents us from employing any of our own Trustees, John has had to relinquish his Trustee status.

As ever, we have vacancies on our Committee for anyone related to the village community who wishes to get involved in the management of our village hall. Feel free to contact myself or our Co-chair, John Gaskin if you have any interest in joining us. *Paul Milner*

Stitchmarsh – Having staggered our way through yet another year of dwindling numbers it is now a serious matter of deciding whether we continue in any form in the future. To that end the first meeting of the new year will be crunch time.

It is proposed that we hold a meeting on Wednesday 8th September at 7.30pm in the Clubroom.

For those that are undecided about a group such as ours being for them, this is a crafting (even general sewing) group of ladies, not experts in any particular field but with possibly some experience in a craft they enjoy, coming together for a couple of hours to pass on knowledge to others as well as learning something new themselves. From knitting to rag rugging, from crochet to patchwork our interests are wide and varied so why not give it a try?

There is an adage, use it or lose it. If we don't get the support then a group such as ours will have to fold and getting is resurrected in the future is often harder to do.

So do come along on the 8th September and if we have enough people, then the next meeting will be on the 22nd September.

For more information or even to let us know you would be interested in coming, contact me on 732362

Parish Council Elections.

A few of the longstanding members of Titchmarsh Parish Council will be standing down in May 2011 and it would be good to see some "fresh blood". To that end we requested Geoff Love of North Street, our newest Councillor, to write an article as to what it means for him to be a Parish Councillor.

We hope this will encourage more candidates.

JG Editor.

"I'm often asked the question – 'why did you bother putting yourself forward for a position on the Parish Council?' Sometimes I ask myself the same question. After all, I am extremely busy at work, I have a young family with all the demands that comes with parenthood, and not enough time to keep up with my friends and relatives.

Add to that the often raised criticism that Parish Councillors have no power and little influence, and a suggestion that the disparate bunch of people that comprise Titchmarsh Parish Council make the Vicar of Dibley look like the board of Directors at Tesco, and why would anyone want to become a councillor?

I think the answer differs from person to person. For me it was both a desire to become involved in village life, and a personality trait that feels a need to change what I don't agree with. My first experience of the Parish Council, prior to becoming a Councillor, was their objection to an extension we were planning at our house in North St. It was subsequently passed, but it planted a seed in my mind as to what role the Parish Council should have in supporting and encouraging an evolving and vibrant village.

The opportunity to put myself forward came when the Parish Council found themselves one member short following uncontested elections in 2007. My wife had suffered my views on everything from HGV lorries through the village and affordable housing, through to dog fouling and cold callers and suggested that if I was that bothered why didn't I join the Parish Council and do something about it rather than just rant at her.

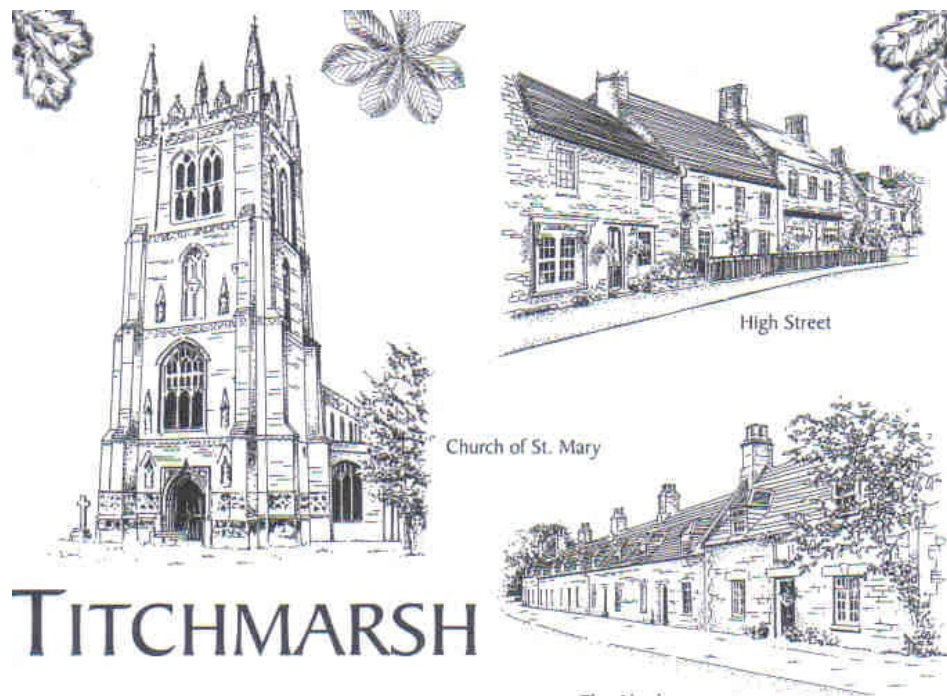
Nearly three years later, and I have surprised myself at how rewarding I find the role. It is fair to say that sometimes you feel as if you are hitting your head against a brick wall as decisions you make are overturned elsewhere, and it is frustrating to realise the process of local democracy moves at the speed of an arthritic tortoise. But Parish Councils do play an important role in trying to promote and encourage a vibrant community and to preserve, where appropriate the heritage of an area.

Since 2007 Titchmarsh Parish Council have been presented with many challenges and opportunities. On some matters, such as the unacceptable parking of HGVs in Huntingdon Rd. the Parish Council are unanimously in agreement. Other areas give rise to very lively debate. In recent months Affordable Housing, Titchmarsh as a conservation area, and the re-siting of the Thrapston Cattle market have all exercised the minds of councillors. Planning applications also provide for an interesting discussion as there are a both traditionalist and liberal views represented around the table.

As for the individual members of the Council, we are a disparate bunch, but what binds us together is a desire to do the best for Titchmarsh. We often do not see eye to eye about what that constitutes, but I am full of admiration for others around the table. Being a Parish Councillor is not something you do for power or recognition, but the work carried out throughout the year by the other councillors in supporting the thriving community that is Titchmarsh is really important. Working full time away from the village means I can't contribute as much in time as those that are retired and I don't have the experience of village life as some who have lived here for many years, but then hopefully I am able to off-set this a little by representing a view from someone still relatively new to the village (i.e. less than thirty years!) with a young family growing up and involved in village amenities.

I am a relatively new councillor but between the eight other members there is probably close to one hundred years experience as members of Titchmarsh Parish Council. But therein lies a concern for the future. At forty three I am the youngest councillor by six years, and about twenty five years younger than the average age. With Council elections due in 2011 it would be great if others would consider standing for election. It is not about age, although it would be good for the Council to have people aged twenty or thirty something expressing their views, but for Titchmarsh to continue to thrive it requires new ideas, different life experiences and new energy to move things forward.

I am thoroughly enjoying my time as a Councillor, and would urge anyone who has a view about how Titchmarsh should develop and how to cherish the special spirit that makes the village what it is, to consider standing in 2011. Be aware though, a two hour Parish Council meeting in the Clubroom is often extended by a couple of hours in the Dog and Partridge. A strong constitution does not just relate to the Parish Council standing orders!"



The above is available on tea towels or as notelets at the village shop.

Finally. The usual "thank you" to all those who have made a contribution to this edition.

We welcome some new and old returning contributors, lets have some more.

The deadline for the October/November Edition will be the evening of *Friday, 17th September 2010*. Please may I have your contribution, at je.greig@btopenworld.com as a Word attachment before that date.

Continue to enjoy Summer

John Greig (Editor)