

# **Chairman's Report - 2007/8**

## **Budget**

At the budget set meeting held back in December 2007, the Council reviewed what it had achieved during the year and decided that it had delivered most of what it had originally set out to do. The main things were improvements to the footpaths, the play equipment and a grant to £3k to the Memorial Halls for a feasibility study. After some discussion, the precept for 2008/9 was set at £14k, and this was an increase of £2,000 over the previous year. It may seem a lot but we do need this amount in order to keep the Council running as it currently is and I hope you will agree that it is spent wisely.

## **Planning**

Again, another busy year on planning. This is an area of Council business that normally attracts a sizable audience when we consider difficult applications! Since April 2007, we have received 54 applications and most of these related to buildings, but 6 were for tree works. The Council is a statutory consultee for the applications, and although we consider them and make recommendations, it is TDBC who subsequently make the actual decisions.

The main event of the year was the proposals for affordable homes in Comeytrove and Dipford, but I'll say no more about that at this stage as the outcome has now been well publicised.

Once again, Mr. Archer has made a very significant contribution but has now handed over the role to Mrs. Hudson and Mr. Ralph. They are already doing a good job and I see no reason to suppose that will change.

## **Housing and Development**

Mr. Archer is the lead for this area and is a natural link with his experience with planning matters. I think we all accept that the Regional Spatial Strategy will result in some form of development within the Parish, and Mr. Archer will now be in an ideal position to keep us all informed.

## **Party in the Park**

We look forward to another well-organised and attended event on 12<sup>th</sup> July. This is now a firm fixture within the community and grows from strength to strength. Mr. Ralph is representing the Council in the organisation of the event and with Mr. Barry Bloxham again at the helm, I am sure it will be another success.

## **Playing Field**

We have done a lot of work in the playing field, and thanks must be given to a number of Councillors – Mr. Parris, Mr. French and Mr. Ralph, for getting to grips with what needed to be done and for the time that they have put into it. It started in July with a RoSPA report that raised a number of issues with the play equipment. Since then, we have made a series of repairs and improvements to the slide, climbing frame, roundabout and, most recently, purchased a new swing. In addition to this, we have re-varnished the entrance gates, put in a stile in the fence at the bottom of the field and provided better seats. The next thing that we will be considering is improvements to the safety surfacing and perhaps some picnic tables near to the roundabout.

## **Footpaths**

We have had another busy year on footpaths. Following on from the work that we did to Wyatt's Field and Carters Way, we have also improved the footpath at the bottom of the playing field.

Thanks to the efforts of a previous Councillor, John Guy, and with our very able volunteer, Mr John White, we were very fortunate in winning a grant of £1,000 from SCC Rights of Way. Part of this will be used to pay for the gravel that we used on the footpath at the playing field and at a number of stiles over Cotlake Hill, and the rest will go towards some new gates at Pokes Lane. We still hope to resurface the entire length of Pokes Lane but, at the moment, that is a long-term aim.

## **Highways**

Mr. Hancock is responsible for liaising with Somerset Highways and things are fairly quiet on that front at the moment. There is always more to do with highways, but we have come to accept the limitations of the funding that seems to prevail at the moment.

## **Allotments**

The allotments continue to remain very popular and all of the 31 available plots are currently in use. At the annual meeting with the Tenants in October 2007, the main item of the discussion was shade from the overhanging trees at Ladylawn. We did try to resolve the problem but, unfortunately, were not able to do so. We did the work to the gate and the entrance some time ago and it all seems to work much better.

I would like to thank Ron Coombes and Fred Sage for all the work that they do at the allotments during the year.

## **Memorial Halls**

The ambition to rebuild a replacement Hall remains as strong as ever and with Mr. Barry Bloxham at the helm, steady progress is being made. The fact that all parties are now working together with the same aim is very encouraging and I'm sure all of the planning and hard work will come to a satisfactory conclusion in due course.

## **Post Office**

During the recent review of Post Offices, we were all very relieved to find out that the Trull is to remain. However, we must be aware that the situation can change and we must use it or lose it!

## **Newsletter**

This continues to be an excellent link with the Council and my thanks again go to Mrs. Wooldridge, and more recently, Becky Hewat, for producing such an interesting bulletin. My thanks also go to Trull Stores and the Post Office for their assistance in distributing the copies.

Geoff Hewett  
Chairman  
21<sup>st</sup> April 2008