



HEATH & REACH PARISH COUNCIL
CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Welcome to the Annual Meeting of Heath and Reach Parish Council

Following the elections last May we welcomed Cllr Paul Green and Cllr Seri Gell as a new councillors and welcomed back Cllr Roger Owers, Fitzpatrick and Hawes who have returned to the council after a break.

Key highlights of 2015/16

Cemetery: The Community Payback scheme continue their great work in the Cemetery – it is now looking well maintained and cared for, somewhere our village can be proud of.

Sports and Recreation: The trim trail at Bryant's Lane has been repaired and is there for the free use of villagers to keep fit!

But please can people not allow their dogs to foul on this field – it is after all a sports facility used by two football teams and local youngsters.

We replaced the tennis court nets at some expense only for them to be vandalised within a few days which is why we resorted to locking the tennis courts and storing the nets securely. The code and keys are available to villagers who will use the courts for their proper purpose, tennis, football, bowls – but not for exercising or training dogs.

The future of the 'pavilion' is the subject of much discussion at our meetings. It is currently only used by the boxing club and the PC recently decided that it would place a limit on the amount that would be spent on capital projects in any year. It is an old building and its future must be in doubt without substantial spend.

As we said at last year's APM we asked CBC to implement Dog Control Orders at Thrift Road. However, so that those who wished to exercise their dogs off the lead could do so, the field was divided in two. Dog walkers in the area where children play must keep dogs on a lead and fouling should be removed from all areas. Hopefully this will help keep our village play area a safe and pleasant asset for us all to enjoy.

Quarries: The Parish Council continues to work with quarry operators and Central Bedfordshire Council to try and ensure operators keep to their planning schedules by attending liaison / operator meetings and to monitor any variations in planning conditions.

A recent example is an application to amend the operating hours at Stone Lane to allow the maintenance and cleaning of the wheel washing facility. The amendment will be restricted to this activity on a maximum of 12 Saturdays per year between 8 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. It specifically does not include earthworks operations, land filling or vehicles movements to or from the site.

Chairman's Initials.....



Highways: The Parish Council also continues to liaise with Central Bedfordshire Highways who are struggling on a decreased budget to service the requirements of villages like Heath and Reach, which is why items such as the repainting of white lines has yet to be carried out. We will continue to press them on this and other highway issues

Village Maintenance: I am sure many of you have noticed that our Village has slowly but surely been undergoing a spruce up. The bus shelters have been painted as have the fences around Thrift Road and Bryant's Lane and the railings along Birds Hill and at the duck pond. If there are other jobs that need attention please could you let the Clerk know so that they can be added to the list.

Planning: The PC has forwarded to the planning inspector its objections to the application for a gypsy and travellers' site on green belt land in Mile Tree road. We are also following closely the progress of the potential application for a second wind turbine.

Finances: Subject to audit, the Parish Council has again kept within budget and has been able to carry forward some reserves and this coming year the precept remains at the same level.

The Parish Council has resolved to underwrite the cost of the bouncy castle and mega slide for the Village Party to celebrate the Queens' 90th Birthday on 4th June at Heath Village Barn – this will be a great opportunity to come together as a village and celebrate our community.

Finally, thanks to my fellow councillors and staff for their efforts over the last twelve months.

Chairman – Richard Thyer
Vice Chairman, Cllr Terry Ellis.

Chairman's Initials.....