

Chelveston-cum-Caldecott News

Parish Council Annual Report 2009

This is the formal Annual Report of the Council's activities up to the Annual Meeting on 12th May 2009.

The Chairman's report on the Council's activities

The last 12 months have been an exceptionally busy year for the Parish Council. There have been 12 formal meetings since the last APA with many external and informal meetings, particularly relating to the airfield development & the World Rubber tyre fire.

The Parish Council considered 12 planning and licensing applications this year – another increase on 2008. As a Quality Parish Council, our views are always well regarded because of our research, preparation and attention to detail. As Chairman I had to make three formal speeches to the planning committees at Thrapston and Northampton and to the Planning Inspector at the appeal hearing for the CRE generator application.

Two applications have been decided differently by the District & County and two are yet to be decided. The Darsdale Farm application is particularly important for us as it could increase traffic through the village. We have therefore requested funding from the developers for traffic calming on the Raunds Rd as a condition of approval.

We continue to work well with NCC Rights of Way officers with Cllr Izzard taking the lead in this area. This year has sent the replacement of the crumbling brick bridge across the stream on the way to Chelveston Cliffs.

We replaced the street lamp adjacent to School House (with a 2/3rds grant from ENC Community Safety Fund), taking the opportunity to install a brighter, but more energy efficient sodium lamp. We were also forced to replace a lamp and column in Caldecott after a motorist lost control during the icy weather. We successfully reclaimed the costs on the motorist's insurance.

Unfortunately, during the same icy weather, the bench in Caldecott was smashed when an unknown car left the road. The bench was cast iron and cannot be repaired. It was installed in 1968/1969 and so has done 40 years of sterling service, although sadly we paid for its refurbishment three years ago. We are exploring the way to fund its replacement – around £800 for a bench of similar robustness and durability.

In 2007-8 we had a particular problem with poorly maintained footpaths and roads and raised these issues at senior levels within NCC. The contractor was replaced last March and we have been working much better with the new highways partnership. There is still no budget for proactive maintenance of paths but every hole of >20mm depth on the paths is now getting repaired within two weeks of being reported, sometimes within days.

There is no budget for routine siding out of paths, even though this saves on repairs in the long term. Instead Jonathan & Matthew Dale have been undertaking community service throughout the year as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. They have sided out the Raunds Rd, Higham Hill and the footpath between Water Lane and Bidwell.

On the roads, there has been no money for resurfacing, but all holes >50mm depth are being promptly attended to. This is still not solving the long term issue but we have been asked which road we would like resurfaced when funds permit. Our choice was obviously the Raunds Rd which is breaking up badly between Redwood and Hawthorn Cottage.

Most of the ditches in the Village survived the winter rains with the exception of those near Disbrowe Court which have become silted up resulting in several flooding incidents for one nearby house.

The Parish Council again organised the Operation Spring Clean in March. Special thanks must again go to John Britten for his sterling efforts and for continuing with litter picking on a regular basis.

We have installed two dog bins to make it easier for our responsible owners to deposit their dog litter when walking. There have been some initial teething problems with emptying them, but ENC is aware and chasing up the contractor accordingly. Thanks to all those who use them.

The 40th Combat Wing of the 8th Air Force are holding a reunion tour on the 30th May which will include a stop at the memorial. The benches have been cleaned and stained and the chains have been replaced with galvanised ones which will withstand the weather better.

On the 4th July, 12 gardens in the Village will open in aid of charity and the Parish Council will be working to ensure the village looks at its best for this event.

Following last year's expression of interest, we have been investigating the provision of allotments. We had secured agreement in principle from ENC and provisional agreement from a land owner to lease the land needed to the Parish Council. Unfortunately, two weeks ago the land owner changed their mind and we are now back to square one – disappointing after all that work!

We have changed the way in which the Council operates this year, with each Councillor having responsibility for one aspect of the Village – Community Safety, Rights of Way, Trees, Finance, Highways. This is working well with each Councillor reporting monthly on activity and issues.

Adrian Dale, Chairman of the Parish Council.

Edited by the Clerk

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Finance for the year ending 31st March 2009.

Let's start with the headlines figures

Balance brought forward	£ 4,148.82
Receipts in year	£11,763.31
Expenditure in year	£-8,067.27
Balance carried forward	£ 7,844.86

The receipts were made up of

Precept	£8,950.00	
Bank interest	£ 106.08	
Donation to the Council	£ 1.00	Traditionally donated by the Chairman to pay my wages!
Grants to the Council	£1,644.95	From NCC £586.95, ENC £390 & Insurance £668.00.
VAT recovery	£1,061.28	Claimed back from the year before.

If you have ever wondered what the Precept is or how it works, read on.

The Council calculates how much it needs in November for the next year and tells ENC the Precept amount in January. Then from April, it's collected from you (the residents) as part of the Council Tax. There are approx 221 houses in the parish, but some have discounts (e.g. MOD ownership, single occupancy, etc), so the number paying is reduced to 157. This gave a typical Band D figure of $£8,950/157 = £57.01$ a year for 2008-9.

(For 2009-10 the numbers for a typical Band D figure are $£9,000/158 = £56.96$ a year).

The expenditure was

Grass cutting	£2,804.49	8 monthly cuts starting in March.
Street Lighting	£1,798.38	
General Admin	£1,049.44	Printing, postage, mileage, internet, courses, fees.
Replacement lamp	£ 584.00	2/3 ^{rds} covered by the ENC grant.
Insurance	£ 475.33	
Grants to village groups	£ 150.00	Fireworks
Village hall hire	£ 149.50	12 Council meetings & the Parish Assembly
Annual Audit	£ 135.00	
Memorial	£ 63.00	
Clerk's salary	£ 1.00	Donated by the chairman.
VAT (recoverable)	£ 857.13	To be claimed back next year.

Assets (or what does the Council own?)

44 Street lamps (Chelveston = 35, Caldecott = 9)	Office equipment of a laminator and a paper shredder
4 Public benches (Chelveston = 4, Caldecott = 0)	all held by the Clerk.
2 War memorials and 2 Noticeboards	

The Council does not own any land in the parish. The 305th BG memorial site is licensed from NCC and the village hall is owned by a charity.

Parish Council Members & Officers

Chair: Adrian Dale, 21 Water Lane (622624).
Vice: Melvyn Wooding, *Melrose Cottage*, Caldecott.
Martin Emerson, *Middle Farm House*, the Green.
Michael Foulger, *Haleworth*, Caldecott.

Glenn Harwood MBE, 7 Britten Close.
Mick Izzard, 6 Pretoria Cottages, Raunds Road.
Patricia Mommersteeg, *Church House*, Caldecott.
Clerk: Mark Hunter *Ashbury*, Caldecott (626039).

E-mails to the Council on Clerk@Chelveston.org.uk