



## BURNHAM PARISH COUNCIL

### CHAIRMANS REPORT 2006/07

**The Annual Parish Meeting of Electors held in the Hitcham Room, at Burnham Park Hall at 8.00 p.m. on Monday 14 April 2007**



It gives me great pleasure to present the Annual Report of Burnham Parish Council for the municipal year 2006/7.

During the past year I was pleased to welcome Mrs Sue Ogden who joined Parish Council in May replacing Mr James Howes who moved to Spain.

During the year, the Parish has seen a stronger and more visible Police Officer and PCSO presence. Dispersal Orders in the High St and confines have assisted in making this a safer environment for all.

Discussions have taken place during the year with South Bucks District Council and the Police regarding the installation of permanent CCTV cameras. At the time, the Parish

Council did not have sufficient information to make a decision as the cost of installation, ongoing maintenance or how the cameras would be monitored was not made clear to us.

However, should fresh information be made available I am sure the new council will revisit the proposals. The Council has arranged for the use of mobile CCTV cameras in hotspots in the area to assist the Police. I was pleased to facilitate the meeting of a NAG – Neighbourhood Action Group - when the Thames Valley Police addressed a packed meeting in Burnham Park Hall to explain the future of policing in this area.

In response to local resident's requests, the Parish Council removed the trees and shrubs that bordered the footpath and play area at St Peter's Recreation Ground. This not only improves the visibility and safety of all persons using the footpath but also removed a trouble spot. The Police have reported a reduction in the number of complaints emanating from this area. We still have a long way to go in eliminating crime and antisocial behaviour.

The Police are still committed to these goals and the Parish Council continues to work closely with them to address these very difficult issues.

The Council is pleased to work with other councils and community groups. We regularly meet with representatives from our neighbouring parishes and the County Council in a project called GC2C i.e. Getting Closer to Communities. This gives us an informal opportunity to discuss matter of joint concerns. I was pleased to chair the inaugural meeting of the Market Healthcheck when Mr Malcolm Godwin of Bucks County Council explained how it would help local people to look at the strengths and weaknesses of their own village/town and decide how they would like to develop in the future. I am pleased to report that as a result of this meeting the initiative has now been taken up by the High St Traders Association.

We have major concerns over the cleanliness of the High St and in response to public requests, the Parish Council has taken over the maintenance of the plants at the Obelisk, has cleaned the High St on several occasions [ although this function should be done by contractors of South Bucks District Council] We have also taken over the maintenance of the toilets at Jennery Lane.

It has always been the aim of the Parish Council to work in partnership with its residents and other bodies to deliver the services requested by residents. To support all age groups, we have been pleased to host the Donkey Derby, the annual Carnival, Beacon Housing Summer Parties, Poppies in the Park, and South Bucks Sports Days in Burnham Park.

During the year grants were given to support the Lighthouse summer play scheme, the High St Traders Association's Christmas Lights and information brochure projects, the Air Ambulance Trust, Women's Royal Voluntary Service, BTCV Tree Warden Scheme, Burnham Historians and the production of a book on the history of Burnham Fire Station.

The Council continues to support the youth in the parish and has two parish councillors on the Burnham Youth Club committee. Councillors also sit as school governors, on committees of local organisations including Burnham Access Group, Burnham Community Association, The Burnham Oasis Project and Beacon Housing.

The Council is responsible for 5 play areas, The George Pitcher Memorial Ground and Nature Park, Burnham Park, footpath clearance, the north churchyard, the pond and 340 street lights. Work was completed this year on the updating of the play ground at the St Peters Play area. This area is well used by all age groups.

Although Burnham has lost a number of trees through recent storms, a number have also been planted. The Parish Council were pleased to join the Evergreen 2000 Trust in the planting of five of Oak Trees at the Cherry Orchard as a living memorial to the late Michael F Twist to enhance the Cherry Orchard for future generations.

The high standard and quality of the George Pitcher Memorial Grounds, Burnham Park and the village has again been maintained through the dedicated and hard work of Council's ground staff Jim Wotherspoon, Tim Garrett and Paul Curtis.

Special thanks go to all the staff for the way they helped manage the summer gypsy invasion and the subsequent clear up in the park. Prompt action saved a lot of unpleasantness and cost to the council. A similar traveller invasion on land outside of our control, owned by Slough Borough Council, took rather longer to clear.

The Stomping Ground continues to be leased to the Burnham Bowls Club and the Burnham Tennis Association. The Parish Council is working with South Bucks District Council to renovate the Stomping Ground play area.

In an attempt to preserve the identity of the village, the Parish has worked with the County Council to install 11 name plates on the approach roads to the village.

One of the many Parish Council functions is the maintenance of the 340 street lights in Burnham. This is a continuing demand on council time and resources. To ensure prompt attention, we would ask residents to quote the street light number or location when reporting faulty street lights direct to the Parish Council.

The Planning Committee meets on a regular basis. As a consultee of the District Council it has reviewed 186 planning applications over the past year. Plans are available for residents to inspect during office hours.

The redevelopment of Burnham Park Halls has not gone as well as we would have liked. Consultation for work to update Burnham Park Hall commenced in 2003. Unfortunately the first two planning application submitted to the District Council were refused. The third application, for minimal building works and the necessary work to ensure the building is compliant with current legislation, was granted on 26 January 2007.

In anticipation of the planning permission, the Parish Council included the finances required to undertake the work in the precept which was approved at Full Council meeting on 15 January 2007. The Parish Council was obliged to inform the District Council of the amount required for the precept before receiving details of whether the planning permission had been granted.

The Parish Council funds the services it delivers to the Parish of Burnham through its precept which is raised on the residents of Burnham only and from the letting of Council premises and investment income. No contributions at all are received from local business through the business rate or central government for the services it delivers.

This year the Parish Council estimated that the cost of providing services to the Parish for 2007/8 would be will be £608K. The Parish Council will raise part of this cost through charges for services, investment income and from Council Reserves. It was therefore agreed to set the parish precept at £472K. This will cost the average band D household the equivalent of **94 p per week**. This figure has been calculated to enable £200,000 to be allocated toward the Halls repairs/refurbishment. The cost of refurbishment is expected to be £1.5 million with the majority of the funds being made up of 2 Public Works loans and the balance taken from reserves.

The administration of the Council is handled by two members of staff. They can be contacted by telephone on 01628 661381, email [burnhamparishoffice@btconnect.com](mailto:burnhamparishoffice@btconnect.com) or via the web site [www.burnhamparish.gov.uk](http://www.burnhamparish.gov.uk) .

**Shorne Tilbey**

**Chairman Burnham Parish Council**