

**News from Cold Norton Parish Council,
including comments from the February 2005 meeting**

Undoubtedly the most significant news for Cold Norton this month is contained in the following e-mail recently received from the County Council's Press Office: -

"Zebra Crossing For Cold Norton – The Cabinet Member for Highways & Transportation has agreed that the County Council will provide a new zebra crossing for Latchingdon Road, Cold Norton, at the request of Local District Council Members.

The crossing will be sited near St Stephen's Road to provide a link between Cold Norton Primary School and the playing field. The design is well advanced and works are programmed to start early in the new financial year.

Councillor Rodney Bass (Con. Tollesbury), Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation said: 'I welcome the progress being made in developing this scheme. We are committed to reducing the risk of road accidents and casualties to vulnerable users. Engineers are now working to ensure that the installed crossing complies with the necessary safety requirements and that works commence as soon as possible.' "

We are grateful for the support of District Councillors John Archer and Lawrence Cooper and County Councillor Brian Mead in what has been a long uphill task to get this approved. And, last but not least, thanks must of course go to County Councillor Rodney Bass.

At the **Village Hall Project** Committee meeting held on 18 February, the Committee reviewed the Feasibility Study produced by architect Bill Haward. Of the three options put forward in the Study, the decision was made to follow Option 1, which is for "New Meeting Room, store and entrance; new children's toilets next to hall; kitchen and general improvements; adapt and slightly increase car park". The three options ranged in cost up to £359,380, and Option 1 is the most expensive. The initial proposals are to raise much of the money from grants, with a significant contribution from the Parish Council (via a PWLB loan and subject to public consultation). We will have to undertake a drive for local fund-raising. This project is of course a very significant undertaking – but the truth of Sue Garnham's comment (that the £60,000 required for the present Village Hall in the early 1980's was in today's terms a task of similar proportions) was entirely understood. A document describing what we want to do is being prepared and will be delivered to every Cold Norton household in the near future.

The following **planning applications** were considered by the Parish Council at its February meeting:

- FUL/MAL/05/00010. 15 Green Trees Avenue. Demolition of existing house. Erection of new 4-bedroom house. The Parish Council found this application not harmful and recommended approval.
- ADV/MAL/05/00088. Great Canney Farm, Hackmans Lane, Purleigh. Erection of 6m flagpole with flag displaying company logo. The Parish Council recommended refusal of this application, because members felt that an advertising flag (especially of such a height) would be inappropriate in such a rural area.

Planning Consultations: - In reply to our query, the District Council confirmed that consultations with parish/town councils are unchanged. In other words, where the views of the parish/town council are contrary to the recommendation of the Chief Planning and Development Services Officer, the application will continue to go to Committee. However, there are two changes to the delegation scheme, one of which members of the public should be aware of. It is that an objection from a member of the public (including residents who live adjacent to or nearby the site) no longer triggers its referral to Committee where Officers are minded to approve the proposals. This change has been necessary in order to provide the required speedy response to applications.

It was noted that there is to be a **Planning Appeal** against the District Council's refusal of application number FUL/MAL/04/00948 - Lords Acre Nursery, Lower Burnham Road - use of office building to provide residential accommodation for workers employed at turkey rearing enterprise. Prior to the District Council's decision, the Parish Council too had recommended refusal.

Request for speed limit south of Palepit Corner: - The Parish Council has written to County Council about the score sheet system recently adopted by County Council for prioritising implementation of speed limits, which the Clerk had completed, and had thereby shown that the Fambridge Road (south) approach to the Palepit junction does not meet with County Council criteria for a 40 mph speed limit, even though the other three approaches to the Palepit junction do have such a speed limit. The letter has noted that "*Although the idea of a score sheet is generally good, it may not be the basis for a suitable criterion in all cases. In this case, it is a modest extension to an existing scheme. The score sheet doesn't take account of the particular circumstances, where an inconspicuous side road leads out, with poor visibility, onto a fast and currently unrestricted road.*" The side road mentioned is St Stephens Road.

Allotments – We had just lost our last allotment holder, and then almost immediately we received an offer from another potential tenant to take over an allotment. The Parish Council discussed this and other issues relating to Cold Norton's allotments at its February meeting. You may remember the report that we had had an offer from the Primary Care Trust to use the land for a community gardening project, but this was a year ago and no progress has been made. This being so, the Parish Council is of the view that the future of the land is still very uncertain, and it was therefore not felt to be a good idea to enter into a year's contract with a new tenant when we can't be sure that the land will be available for a whole year. Perhaps we could hear some more positive news from the PCT or from the District Council in the near (or not so near) future that could change the situation. But, for the time being at least, this offer to take over an allotment was reluctantly refused.

Dates of the next Parish Council meetings – The forthcoming monthly meetings are scheduled for the following Thursdays: - 3 March 2005, and 7 April. The Annual General Meeting will be held as part of the monthly meeting scheduled for Thursday 5th May, but this date will need to be reviewed if it transpires that Thursday 5th May is the date of the General Election. The Annual Parish Meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 3rd May. District Council Officer Nicola Plumb will attend the March meeting to discuss affordable housing with the Parish Council. Parish Council meetings are held at 8 p.m. in the Committee Room of the Village Hall, and members of the public are warmly welcomed to hear the proceedings and to speak during the time set aside for that purpose.

To contact the Parish Council: Write to the Parish Clerk (Mary Bryant) at 5 Thatchers Croft, Latchingdon, Chelmsford, CM3 6UD, or phone/fax 01621 744446, or e-mail to *mary.bryant@ntlworld.com*. Cold Norton's web site is www.cold-norton.org.uk