

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

From the APM, AGM and May Meeting

APM – 3rd May: all PC Members were present plus 30 members of the public (from a population of circa 1050 people /400 homes). Mrs Sue Garnham, as **chairman** of the PC summarised the year, covering what the **precept monies** had been used for and advising that the PC had in the course of the year considered 50 **planning applications**, 4 had been agricultural (for information only), 24 decisions made by the PC had been upheld by Maldon District Council, 14 decisions were overturned and 8 were still going through the planning process. Regarding **footpaths**, due to a good relationship with the footpaths officer and local landowners these have been kept open and walkable for most of the year.

The main success was the positive result from the public enquiry which meant the **bridleway** along the length of the old railway line was made official – this has still to be way marked etc, but is available for use. Thanks were given to **Mrs Mary Bryant** for not only her hard work in regards to the bridleway, but her total commitment to her role as Clerk to the Parish Council for 16 years. Mrs Garnham then presented Mrs Bryant with a special certificate in recognition of her service to the community.

Mrs Garnham went on to say that unfortunately **playground vandalism** continues to be a problem and apologised for the fact that the **web site** has not been updated for some months – this being due to operator difficulties, but will be rectified in the near future.

The Chairman's report was followed by a report by **District Councillor**, Mr. John Archer, who began by talking about the couple of difficult years experienced by **Maldon District Council** due to having 2 Chief Executive Officers in this period, however there is real confidence and belief that the new CEO can turn around MDC's financial performance. Redundancies and restructuring at lower levels is now complete and restructuring will now be applied to higher levels posts.

Changes to how telephone calls/visitors are dealt with at **MDC offices** now mean that all advisors are now able to deal with all types of queries. **Promenade Park** reopened a couple of weeks ago, with the **boating lake** due to open shortly.

The next report was from Mr. Brian Mead, **County Councillor**, who started by explaining that the **zebra crossing** was still not in operation due to sewage pipe work and a change of contractor, but that work should be starting again in a couple of weeks. Mr Mead advised that his work as a County Councillor majored on **children and schools, highways and the fire service**, which included the Trading Fire Station Company responsible for exporting refurbished fire engines, generating revenue for the County. Mr Mead talked about the excellent **Park & Ride** system installed at Sandon and said he believed there should also be a 'park & ride' system to serve out patients and visitors travelling to Broomfield Hospital.

PC Andrew Bagley from **Maldon Police** Station spoke briefly, advising that **Neighbourhood Policing Teams** would be introduced at the end of the month, replacing the 'village policeman' system, and that visits will then be made to **Neighbourhood Watch** Teams.

Paul McNeill for the **Primary Care Trust** talked about the benefits of allotments in terms of exercise and social interaction. So far at the start of the PCT's two year programme at the **allotments**, the site has been cleared, raised beds created and water 'on tap' will shortly be available. Cold Norton **Primary School** has been heavily involved and has come up with the name '**Vegetable Heaven**'. An open invitation to 'drop in and help and have a cup of tea' when you can, was extended to all, also to **take home some fresh produce** from the allotments.

Next Philip Wakeling talked briefly about the **Village Hall Project**: that it is progressing well - an application will be made to the lottery grant for funds, but advised that 10% i.e. £35,000 needs to be raised by the village. Then Mr. Roger Hawes reminded the audience about the '**sponsor a brick**' scheme is now in operation. Mr. Hawes then went on to talk about a scheme his former employer operates that has made a donation to the Village Hall Project fund because, as a former employee, Mr. Hawes been involved in charity work (the village hall is a registered charity) by preparing the business plan which is necessary when applying for a grant. Other companies which it is known operates similar schemes are **Vodafone, Barclays and Fords**, so if anyone currently works for, or previously worked for, any of these please talk to Roger Hawes – you won't need to write a business plan in order for the village hall to benefit!!!

Questions raised included **noise pollution** and the fact that MDC operates an answer phone service for this over weekends – Mr Archer to bring this up with MDC. The PC was asked to reconsider their decision to allow a **car boot sale** to be held on the playing field – the PC agreed that this could be represented/discussed at the next PC meeting. The third question concerned the plans to extend the kerb at **Station Road**; Mr Mead advised that this was due to an accident occurring at this point. This led to a discussion regarding the fact that the **siding back** along the **north side of Latchingdon Road** had still not been done – Mr Mead was asked that priority be given to the siding back. The next question involved the **village building boundary envelope** Mr Archer offered to clarify the matter with the resident raising the matter. The fifth matter raised was the **rubbish** dumped in the ditch nearly opposite Burnham Avenue left after recent electrical work, the Parish Clerk to organise removal. Finally the scope of use for **bus passes** was raised; Mr. Mead advised that the over 60 bus pass can be used across both services operated by Maldon and Chelmsford.

The meeting was officially closed at 9.15 pm and refreshments were served; visitors were invited to discuss matters further with members of the Parish Council or other guest speakers during this period.

The Parish Council AGM was held on 10th May 2006

At this meeting officers etc were elected as follows:

Chairman: Mrs. Gloria Gold

Vice Chairman: Prof. Leslie Barclay

Playing Field Reps: Mr. Charles Litscher and Mrs. Andrea Allen

Nature Conservation Area Reps: Mrs. Allen and Mrs. Gold

Village Hall Reps: Prof. Barclay and Mrs. Sue Garnham

Footpaths Rep: Mr. Philip Wakeling

PC Nominee on School Board of Governors: Mrs. Allen

The Internal Auditor was confirmed as ASAP Office Services and signatories to remain as at present.

The AGM was followed by the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council

Wind Farms: this came under planning application section of the meeting and whilst the application is for a site at Bradwell, they would be visible from Cold Norton. PC Members considered the proposal harmful for the following reasons: The proposed wind farm would be visually intrusive on one of the last remaining undeveloped and attractive sections of the Essex coastline, adversely affecting the tranquillity and natural beauty of the area. The noise pollution that would result from such a development would have detrimental effect on the quality of life for both human and wild life. The adverse effect the wind farm would have on the thriving wild life in the area, causing species to be lost from the Dengie area, long known for its varied and abundant wildlife. Wind farms, which are not cost effective and are ineffective at generating power, would have a major negative effect on the human population and natural environment. The area should not be perceived as a 'dumping ground' now that Bradwell Power Station has been decommissioned.

Widening of the footway to Country Produce: whilst Mr. Mead had mentioned at the APM his idea of the introduction of a footway on the south side of Latchingdon Road, members were reminded that this was assessed three years ago and was found not to be a possibility due to gardens which were sited close to the road. Members decided that highways must be urged to give priority to siding back the current footway on the north side.

Parking in St. Stephens Road: this was brought up again at the request of a resident, directed towards parents dropping off/collecting children from the school and causing dangerous/inconvenient situations not only to residents, but also to the children. This will be raised again with the school (who have sent numerous letter to parents), the police (for spot checks again) and highways. Additionally, once the zebra crossing is operational the school will be asked to put into practice the 'Safer Journeys to School Programme, whereby parents will be directed to park at the village hall and walk the children to school using the new crossing.

During the AOB section of the Agenda, a comment was made re the lack of young family people at the Annual Parish Meeting the previous week.

Apologies that the report for the ordinary meeting has covered fewer subjects this month, but this is because of the inclusion of the APM report.

Forthcoming Parish Council Meeting scheduled for: 7th June 2006, 8 pm in the Committee Room at the Village Hall.

To contact the Parish Council: please write to: The Parish Clerk (Maria Dyer), at Exordium, 30b Latchingdon Road, Cold Norton, Chelmsford, Essex. CM3 6JG. E-Mail to mariadyer30@yahoo.co.uk or phone (Monday to Friday before 5 pm please) 01621 829566.