

# CHARLTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Chairman's Annual Report for the year ending 31st March 2008

### **Council**

Elections were held on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2007. As only 5 persons had submitted nomination forms for the 7 seats, they were duly elected unopposed.

The full Council met 6 times during the year, and there were 6 meetings of the Planning Committee. We began the year with the two vacancies. Cllr Mrs Diane Barlow was co-opted at the September meeting, and Cllr Mrs Frances Wilkinson was co-opted at the March meeting, thus filling all 7 Council seats. The current Councillors are:

Cllr. Brian Browne (Chairman)  
Cllr. Ted Grazier (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr. Steve Eggleston  
Cllr. Mrs Freddie Jack  
Cllr. Michael Wood  
Cllr Mrs Diane Barlow  
Cllr Mrs Frances Wilkinson

### **Flooding**

In the severe floods of 20<sup>th</sup> July, 27 properties were flooded. Some residents are still not back in their homes. The Environment Agency, who in 2003 became responsible for the Merry Brook from above The Bight to the River Avon in place of Wychavon District Council, is carrying out a study of possible major works to reduce flooding risk, and also maintenance work to improve water flow in the Merry Brook. A Charlton Flooding Group has been formed by residents to maintain the pressure on the Environmental agency to carry out this work. Worcestershire County Highways have also been urged to keep gulleys in Ryden Lane and Brook Lane clear.

Wychavon District Council have given us a grant of £2000 towards reducing flood risk, and District Councillor Tom McDonald has also given us a further £50 for this purpose. We were about to use this money to fund work on brook clearance across the Green by our landscape contractor, but have deferred this as the Environment Agency are firmly saying they will do it.

### **Footpaths**

The Footpaths Warden, Clive Bostle, has been active throughout the year in maintaining our footpaths, and he provided guided walks for residents on two occasions last summer.

### **Parish Plan**

The Parish Plan Group set up in 2005, after much work and a successful consultation evening in November 2005, unfortunately did not manage to complete the plan. The Parish Council is very grateful for the work put in by the Group, and now wish to refresh the data and continue the work. Therefore the Parish Council is seeking volunteers to form a new Parish Plan Group.

### **Lengthsman**

Steve Gwillam has been in Charlton most Wednesday mornings clearing gutters and footways, and generally keeping the village tidy. He has maintained the sight lines at the junction of Boston Lane and the B4084. He found the hedge to the Cemetery was dying, and so has replanted it with hawthorns.

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### **Police**

PC Julie DeParis has responded to any call by us and continues to be readily available by e-mail.

### **Litter Pick**

Mrs Ruth Owen and the Scout Group undertook a litter pick in June and again won the village a grant of £500, of which the Parish Council awarded them £100. A grant of £250 was also given to the Workman Trust for reducing draughts in the Old Schoolroom. The Parish Council have also given a grant to the PCC to repair and continue to maintain the Church clock. Our thanks to the Scouts.

### **Cemetery**

The Parish Council have received two offers of donating a seat in the cemetery, and have been delighted and grateful to the two families concerned. One seat is installed and the other should be installed in the near future.

### **Flower tubs**

The Parish Council is very grateful for the maintenance of the flower tubs by Brenda Bowley which enhance the pleasure of our lovely village green.

### **Web Site**

There have been on average 100 visits per month to [www.charltonparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.charltonparishcouncil.org.uk) throughout the year. Minutes of Council and Committee meetings are displayed, and much other information. The Parish Clerk now has broad band and a scanner (paid for jointly with his other Parish Council).

### **Public Notice Board.**

Unfortunately some person had attempted to open the notice board without the necessary special tool. Security latches were obtained and fitted to prevent a recurrence. Our thanks to Mrs Betty Waterman (No. 2 The Dovecote) for keeping the board tidy and ensuring villagers can display current notices. Please contact her to display a notice.

### **Parish Precept**

The precept set at the January 2007 Council meeting was maintained at £9,600 ( £36.40 on a band 'D' house) for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007. At the January 2008 meeting a precept of £9,900 (£38.07 on band 'D' house) was set for the year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008.

### **Code of Conduct**

The Department for Communities and Local Government have revised the Code of Conduct in force since 2002, and required us to adopt the new code, which the Council did at the September meeting. The changes are small, but notably cover councillors who have declared an interest being able to take part in the public forum at Council Meetings and Committee meetings.

Brian Browne  
Chairman  
3 April 2008