



CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2008 2009

This has been an interesting year for Eirwen Tagg as Parish Manager and me as Chair. The learning curve is not as steep as when we started in these roles last year.

The Great Linford Parish Council (GLPC) is one of the largest in Milton Keynes with almost 20,000 residents in just under 9000 dwellings. Parish Councils are the first tier of elected representatives, and are governed by various Acts of Parliament. We are subject to a strict code of conduct on our activities and how councillors conduct themselves. We have 17 councillors on the Parish Council who deal with the activities of our two main committees, Finance and Planning, and Recreation and Environment.

We are statutory consultees for planning applications in the parish. In the past year we have discussed 110 applications and 65 have been agreed without comment. We commented on 38 applications, ten of which were refused planning permission by MK Council, eight were approved with conditions. Three were amended in line with GLPC comments and then approved. One application was withdrawn and ten are unresolved.

The aim of the parish council is to provide good cost-efficient services and this is reflected in our staffing and in the level of precept which is paid by residents in this parish. One of the lowest among urban parishes in the new city area.

We manage good quality football pitches at Marsh Drive where 23 teams are active. Our cricket grounds are also in demand and maintained to a high standard. The football facility at Conniburrow has drainage problems and pitches have been unplayable. With funds from the closure of sports facilities at the former Gyosei School site, we have initiated a proposal, with the Conniburrow Community Association, to solve drainage problems, while making the site available for baseball and softball.

The parish is involved in the wider aspects of street care and we are now seeing an improvement in the standard of the grass verges and the grass cutting as a result of the change in the landscaping contractors. We also look

forward to improved maintenance of all trees and shrubs.

The fouling of pavements and recreation areas is a major issue and we spend significant sums of money to prevent such nuisance by providing dog bins and bags. We also provide seats in public places and have exciting plans to create a community orchard at Downs Barn.

There is great public anger at present over expense claims by politicians. GLPC councillors have again voted not to receive any payment for the time they give to the Parish Council. However, GLPC has agreed to pay for a taxi to and from council meetings, for those councillors who do not drive and have no other way of getting to meetings. The only reimbursement councillors can claim, with a receipt, is £30 per year for printing out agendas, minutes and supporting papers at home. This is a net saving on time, paper and first class postage.

Our financial position remains healthy as a result of careful planning and cost control. I thank staff and councillors for their contribution but especially Eirwen in her first year as Parish Manager in ensuring we follow best practice in terms of governance and risk assessment. This has been helped by Councillors David Stabler and Charles Allum who chair the two main committees and give unstinting service to the residents of Great Linford and the wider community.

Cecil Macaulay
Chairman

