

A warm welcome to all those who have moved into Bluntisham during the last year, and I would like to invite you to the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 28th April at the Village Hall in Mill Lane along with all our other parishioners.

During the past year we have had some changes in membership with the resignation of Melvyn Sibson due to work commitments and the co-option of his successor Harry Firth. The Local Elections saw Joy James elevated to District Councillor in place of the retiring Mrs Wales of Earith. My sincere thanks to them for all for their hard work along with all the other Parish Councillors.

The village looks very attractive in the good weather we are currently enjoying and we are all indebted to Carol and Keith Chessum who look after the Parish grounds and Walter Newman for keeping the bus shelters clean and tidy. Thanks also to David Gedye our tree warden who works tirelessly in the back ground and to Eric Long our hard working clerk.

Housing Developments

Bluntisham seems to grow and grow and at present we have two major ongoing proposals which will mean a total of 70/80 additional dwellings in the Village. In addition the Parish Council have received an enquiry from the County Council regarding the use of the land next to the school for development in partnership to develop a new Village Hall/Community Centre.

A New Village Hall/Community Centre.

During the year the Parish Council has discussed the existing facilities and unanimously agreed to pursue all avenues leading to a new large permanent building being constructed.

Working closely with Cambridgeshire ACRE the Parish Council have appointed the Wilkinson. Pratt partnership to develop a strategy and put forward plans for consideration, this included a Village questionnaire of which over 50% were returned giving a good outline of the Parishioners expectations. A presentation of initial plans can be viewed at the annual Parish Meeting to be held on the 28th April 1997.

Discussions are currently taking place as to the possible siting and financial provision of a new Village Hall and there are many possibilities that the Parish Council can pursue in an effort to secure funding for construction and long term financial stability. As far as fiances are concerned it is the intention of the Parish Council to approach the National Lottery and any such application will be made with the assistance and guidance of both the architect and Cambridgeshire ACRE.

In the course of our enquiries to the purchase of the County Council owned land adjacent to the school the County Council indicated their willingness to donate a significant portion of the land to the village in return for the Parish Councils co-operation in pursuing the development of a number of houses close to Colne Rd.

Discussions are in their infancy but the main points are listed below:

- 1. The County Council will not sell any part of the land to us in the foreseeable future.
- 2. They have asked us to discuss future uses of the land with them.
- 3. They have verbally suggested that they develop 25/30 houses on 2/3 Acres of land adjacent to Colne Rd.
- 4. They donate the balance of the land to the Village with services laid to a Village Hall site.
- 5. They are not at this stage willing to discuss the future leasing of the land to the Parish Council beyond the year 2001 if they fail to get our agreement.

6. They have indicated that they are prepared to await new County structure plans which may envelop this land into the Village area of 'Limited Rural Growth'. This would allow them to apply for building permission without the Parish gaining any benefit if granted.

Meeting Walk.

Your Council still opposes any development that crosses Meeting Walk and our stance on this matter remains unaltered.

Playing fields

The new field next to the school is woefully under-used and the lack of use is not helping the Parish Councils argument of needing more safe open spaces for the children of the village. Hopefully by the time this is printed there will be a new football pitch in situ.

We would remind you that the children's play area is designed for smaller children with the equipment not designed for heavy weight use. It was with regret that this area was locked in July as we were unable to keep it clear of broken glass and had to prevent infants from using it for safety reasons. Because a minority of people seemed to find it amusing to break glass bottles (mainly beer) around the Mill Lane playing field not only is it dangerous it is costly to clear up.

In the mean time please use the new recreational field as this makes the Villages claim for additional facilities all the more stronger.

Unfortunately, along the way we do encounter some moans and groans and this year is no exception.

Dog Fouling

Again this is becoming a real problem in many areas of the Village. We would remind you that dogs are not allowed on either playing fields. Health cleanliness being the foremost reasons. Last month two reports from Parishioners were forwarded to the dog warden to pursue grounds for prosecution. Please, is it too much trouble for the dog owners to clear up after their pets.

Litter

Again, please pick up litter. There are bins around the village for this purpose and it saves others doing it for you. It also detracts from the appearance of the Village.

Vandalism

Regretfully this has cost the Parish Council, and yourselves, a lot of money for repairs and large insurance claims that will result no doubt in increased premiums next year. This is both antisocial and expensive. The Police are currently investigating a spate of such crimes from earlier in the year.

Neighbourhood Watch

Fortunately the village has a very active Neighbourhood Watch group which regularly liaise with police representatives and reports suspicious incidents for the protection of all in the village. Almost the whole of the village is covered and householders are encouraged to contact their co-ordinator in the event of noticing anything untoward or suspicious which could prevent a crime being perpetrated. Any interested householder who has not been contacted by their Co -ordinater and wishes to be a part of the scheme should contact David Lumb 4 High Street or by telephone on 841687.Co-ordinators are urgently required for "The Sycamores" and "Poplars".

Footpaths

A new path currently being considered on Station Rd will hopefully give safer access to the footpath leading to Nobles Lane. All other paths continue to be well used and are pleasant to walk for Parishioners. It is hoped that a further permitted path will be developed later this year. Our thanks to all the land owners concerned and to Mr Chessum for the good state of the paths. Please respect the adjoining crops when you use the walks around the village.

Street Lighting

This year has seen extra lights put into St Marys Close and in spite of the County Council considering reducing lighting levels no cuts were made. Probably it would have lead to more time and money talking about it than any actual savings. We do seem to have some rogue lights, if you see one that is faulty please report it for repair on (01223) 317723.

Village Newsletter

I believe a village the size of Bluntisham should be able to produce and maintain an interesting and regular newsletter if anyone is interested in co-ordinating and producing such a publication please contact the Clerk for further information.

Members of Bluntisham Parish Council and Other Representatives.

Chairperson Richard Saltmarsh, 12 Colne Road, Tel 840975.

Vice Chairperson Gary James, 16 Wheatley Cresent, Tel 841895.

Councillors Susan Everest "Trebarwith", Station Road Tel: 841510

Harry Firth, Orchard House, Mill Lane, Tel: 841587 David Godfrey, High Wood, Heath Road, Tel: 841324 Philip Godfrey, The Manor, Wood End, Tel: 841029

Frank Hudson, 20 St Marys Close, Tel: 841288

Joy James, 34 Wood End, Tel: 842997 Ken Lincoln, 31 Sycamores, Tel 740588 Tony Rowell, 11 East Street, Tel: 842569 Kathy Searle, 26 Holidays Road, Tel: 842293

Parish Clerk Eric Long, 1 Wood End, Tel: 842638

District Councillor Joy James, 34 Wood End, Tel: 842997

John Eddy, New Farm, Meadow Drive, Earith Tel: 841476

County Councillor John Eddy, New Farm, Meadow Drive, Earith Tel: 841476

Member of Parliament The Rt hon. John Major, MP, House of Commons,

London SW1A 0AA.