

## Annual Report 2008 – 2009

**Come to the Parish Assembly on 23rd April 2009 in the Clubroom.  
Doors open 7:15, meeting starts at 8 pm.**

**Introduction.** The Parish Council met six times during the year and organised the Parish Assembly in April 2008.

To ensure that Newnham is well represented and has a positive influence on borough and county policy makers, we have responded to numerous consultation documents from, amongst others, the Borough and County Councils, the Government Office of the South East (GOSE), South East Water and the Environment Agency. Councillors have attended meetings of the Basingstoke District Association of Parish & Town Councils, Local Strategic Partnership Board, Country Watch, County Council Transport Panel, Natural Environment Forum, Energy Recovery Facility Liaison Group, Hampshire Association of Local Councils AGM and the meeting organised by our MP, Maria Miller, with Lord Adonis, Minister of State for Transport, to discuss improvements to the M3. In addition, our clerk attended Borough Council & Hampshire Association Liaison meetings.

The website continues to be an important communication channel to electors and supplements our regular reporting in The Villager. Our thanks go to the editor, Sue Turner, and the volunteer distributors.

BT finally agreed to the request approved at the 2008 Parish Assembly to remove the phone box from Newnham Green. We were less successful with our request to Network Rail to hide the ugly equipment box on Newnham Road.

We are very grateful to PC Andy Reid, our beat officer, who has continued to visit the parish regularly to combat crime and to attend our meetings.

We would also like to thank John Broughton for organising the litter picks in Newnham and all those who helped.

**1. Highways.** After campaigning for seven years we had the speed limit in Newnham reduced from 40 to 30 mph in November! Hampshire County Council expects to carry out a speed survey during April 2009 and we will request further traffic calming measures, if required.

Highways successfully cleared the ditches in Blackstocks Lane, which added to the flooding problem at the bottom of Crown Lane. The ditch and culvert clearance carried out in February has improved the situation, but clearance of tree roots

is still required. The next area requiring attention is Newnham Road.

### **2. Planning.**

**The South East Plan.** In late summer the Secretary of State's proposed changes were issued for consultation. We made four objections:

- To the increase in the dwellings per annum for the borough for the period 2006 to 2026 from 825 to 945 and the consequent total from 16,500 to 18,900. This level of house building would not meet the Government's own criteria for sustainable development, particularly from the fresh water supply; waste water disposal; land use and biodiversity points of view.
- To the proposed southern boundary of the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley sub-region. We consider that the boundary should run along the M3 throughout the Basingstoke & Deane Borough area, rather than south of the M3. This is to avoid opening the area for housing development, causing significant and lasting damage to the rural habitat and villages.
- To the deletion of a commitment by Central Government to funding, at least in part, the cost of necessary infrastructure.
- To the removal of the original wording of the policy on Infrastructure & Implementation, because without a statutory requirement to put in place the necessary infrastructure the whole concept of 'phasing' ceases to have meaning.

**Local Development Framework** The Borough Council is preparing and consulting on the documents which will form the Local Development Framework (LDF), including Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), which will replace the Approved Local Plan 1996 - 2011. See: [www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning/localplan](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning/localplan)

We commented on the Borough Council's Draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment plus their Draft Settlement Hierarchy and Hampshire County Council's Rural Strategy. We were particularly concerned that the Draft Settlement Hierarchy suggests that the Borough Council is quite prepared to condemn many of the small rural communities to a future of gradual decay and decline because the villages appear not to meet some ill thought out criteria of sustainable development. In contrast, the Hampshire County Council's draft Rural Strategy

showed a good understanding of the needs of rural communities.

**Local Planning Applications.** During 2008 the planning laws were changed so that permitted development now includes small rear 2 storey extensions, (only single storey in Conservation Areas), which meet certain defined conditions including compliance with Building Regulations.

The Borough Council is the designated planning authority with the power to grant or reject planning applications. The Parish Council is consulted and has the choice of 'no objection'; 'no objection subject to conditions' or to 'object with reasons'. Only ten planning applications, plus one Notification of Intent for work on trees in a Conservation Area were received, much lower than in previous years. We objected to one of the applications and requested conditions on two.

**3. Clubroom.** The Parish Council has continued to work closely with the Clubroom Committee on the urgent need for a replacement community hall.

An Annual General Meeting was held in July, after which a questionnaire was delivered to all homes in the parish in September and 36% of households responded. The Borough Council has indicated that planning permission for one or two houses on the current site would probably be forthcoming, as long as a 'suitable' alternative site in the parish had been identified for a replacement. However, they consider that the sites mentioned in the questionnaire outside the parish were not 'suitable'. As no owner of agricultural land within the parish is willing to make a plot available, the possibility of fund raising to rebuild on the current site or for a community facility on land owned by Newnham Church are being actively investigated.

The Clubroom Committee urgently requires a Chairman and committee members.

**4. Finance.** The approved expenditure budget for 2008/09 was set in November 2007 at £5690. On the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 the funds carried forward totalled £3,384 plus an outstanding VAT refund of £273. The provisional excess of income over expenditure of £534 for 2008/09 resulted in funds carried forward at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 of £4191, including the £143 VAT refund due in May/June. The Council considers that these reserves are appropriate.

### Provisional Accounts 2008/09

Item	Budget	Actual	09 – 10 Budget
Salaries	1884	1864	1915
Training	300	56	150
Insurance	380	399	420
Audit Fees	160	200	160
Clubroom	600	600	600
Green	650	870	800
Villager	450	430	450
OCHRE	450	450	450
Hospice		450	450
Cricket Club	50	50	50
Footpaths	100	21	50
Repairs	250	0	150
Subscriptions	305	293	320
Expenses	111	176	167
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>5690</b>	<b>5859</b>	<b>6132</b>
Grant	1070	1070	1100
Precept	4600	4600	4600
BDBC cutting	290	290	290
NGPA	180	293	255
Bank Interest	90	80	0
Refund		60	
<b>Income</b>	<b>6,230</b>	<b>6393</b>	<b>6245</b>

(Excluding VAT)

Significant deviations from budget:

- Green costs £220 above budget due primarily to the collection of the grass. Previous year expenditure was £370 below budget, as ditch clearance deferred to summer 2008.
- Training was £244 below budget due to lower than expected costs for new councillors.
- No repairs required to the bus shelters against a budget of £250 and footpaths expenditure £79 below budget.
- The £450 donation to St Michael's Hospice was supported at the 2008 Parish Assembly.

**The approved expenditure budget for 2009/10** was set in November 2008 at £6132. The parish council decided not to increase the precept from the £4,600 of 2008/09, which represents £18.62 per year for a band D dwelling, (1.39% of the total council tax). Maintenance costs for the Green were set to cover collection of the grass after the first cutting. The expected income of £6245 assumes no bank interest and is only marginally above budgeted expenditure. The build up in reserves to cover possible replacement of one, or more, of the bus shelters has been temporarily deferred.

4<sup>th</sup> April 2009

**Parish Council at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009**

**Clerk:** Susan Turner 761 606.

**Chairman:** Roger Booth 762 456. **Deputy:** Jeff Ford 762 886. **Councillors:** Sheyne Bauermeister 767 855; Nigel Bell 762 104; Sue Mann 768 560; Ian Riley 767 084