

EASTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2009

Before writing the year's report I looked back at what was in last year's and was very tempted to do a "copy and paste" as so little progress had been made to deal with the various short comings.

The condition of the roads in the parish continues to be a source of concern and irritation; the very occasional filling of a pothole here and there does not resolve the continuing deterioration. I note that one or two minor roads in Rochford have been closed recently and major repairs have been executed. I would point out that none of those roads were in the dreadful state that we see on some in Eastham. When I wrote this report earlier this month work on the long standing problem of the land slide on the Highwood was still unresolved; but now, perhaps because they knew the APM was imminent a start has been made. It is to be hoped that now as they have started work in the parish they will have a blitz and deal with all the parish's outstanding road issues in the near future but I wouldn't hold your breath!

We have local and EU elections in June 09 and national elections next year. It will be up to all of us to continue to press, at every opportunity, those who seek to be and eventually are elected to serve us to stop the box ticking culture and reintroduce common sense into the way we are governed.

We have appointed a new Lengthsman for the Parish very recently and he has made a very promising start. The keeping open of water gullies is a top priority but removal of rotten leaves from several road verges where they are danger to vehicles braking on downward slopes has still to be addressed. The cost of the Lengthsman is met by a grant from Worcestershire County Council. This grant is still a part if only a very small part of our council tax bills.

The Council has only received 2 planning applications during the past year. The credit crunch has greatly reduced housing activity and so Malvern have cut the number of planning officers but they have strengthened their compliance staffing

When we agreed this year's precept the Council continued to be mindful of the need to build up a reserve against unexpected expenditure such as the possibility of any legal challenge taken against the Council or the expense of an election. The Council has agreed to make a small increase in their contribution to the mowing of the church yard and is to seek quotations to paint the railings around the hall.

I would like to express our thanks to County Councillor Reg Farmer and District Councillor Gill Farmer for all their hard work and quick response to any requests for assistance. Mr Reg Farmer is retiring as our County Councillor and I would like to thank him for his support over his many years of service.

I am grateful to my fellow councilors for their hard work and support over the past year and I would especially like to thank Geoff Brookes who oversees minor planning applications in consultation with other Councilors and the Clerk. Finally thank you to Sue Burrows for her efficient grip on the office of Parish Clerk.

John Inge
Chairman of Eastham Parish Council