

## **Chairman's Report Spring 2017**

At the Council meeting in January we set out the Precept for the year 2017/18 and I am pleased to announce that, unlike the District Council, we have reduced our tax bill by 5%. This has been achieved by tight financial control, reviewing existing contracts, maximising third party contributions, Councillors doing a lot of the work and also foregoing their entitlement to their yearly allowance. This has enabled us to maintain our commitments whilst lowering the tax.

We continue to manage the Five Year Management Plan for the Common, albeit with little or no input from SNC. You will have noticed that new Bridlepath signs have been erected on the west side of the Common adjacent to the B1113. Unfortunately a couple of weeks after being erected, someone took it upon themselves to uproot one of them and throw it in the copse 200-300 yards away. This would have involved more than one person given the size and weight of the post. People should note that there are no bridlepaths alongside either the south or east sides of the Common and if people see this being abused would you contact Helen Sibley at SNC as she is the person responsible for these matters.

We are scheduling another set of litter picks this year. Watch our website for details.

The people who manage the phone mast at the rear of the Village Hall have applied to raise the mast height by five metres. This will enable other mobile operators to use the mast and it should also provide better coverage within the Village.

As you may or may not be aware SNC have called for land to be considered for potential development within the Village in the next phase of the local plan. One of the areas that SNC have put forward is the area at the north end of the Meadows and to which we and Bracon Ash & Hethel Council strongly object to. We would welcome your views on this and any other potential sites and can you in the first instance channel them via our Clerk.

We have experienced delays in the replacement and refurbishment of the floodlighting towers at the all – weather court at the back of the Village Hall. We apologise for this but by the time you read this report they should be up and running.

We have allocated monies for the refurbishment and fit out of the red phone box outside the World's End. Thanks to all who put forward suggestions to its use and yes they were all respectable! We will be using it as an information and local history source for the Village and would ask that if people see it being abused to contact us or our PCSO Darrin Sore to report the matter. All the work will be carried out by volunteers, with the exception of the electrical work which has to be carried out by a qualified person.

We are still experiencing problems with rats at the Village Pond. We notified SNC in October but the rat population seems to have proliferated. This is caused by people feeding the ducks and we would ask again for people to recognise that the rats spread Weil's disease (leptospirosis). It is one of the most common zoonosis(disease spread from animals) in the world. We have erected new signs making people aware of the problem and would request that members of the public respect them.

The perennial problem of dog waste has to come to the fore again. I know the vast majority of dog owners act responsibly but I have seen instance recently of dogs defecating on arable land, planted with wheat and this means disease can easily get into the food chain. If you see this abuse happening please report to either us or SNC Environmental Team.

We are still looking for people to come onto the Council, so if you feel you can contribute you will be more than welcome.

P. Leigh  
Chairman, Mulbarton Parish Council