

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I am pleased to report that during the last year we finally signed the lease with Buckinghamshire County Council for lease of the Thornborough Community Woodlands. While we are pleased to be able to bring this wonderful 183 acre site into our care, it is not the role of the Parish Council to administer the site nor take any financial liability for upkeep. Therefore a dedicated band of supporters are currently working towards the establishment of a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation (to be named Thornborough and Coombs Woodland Enterprise Trust) and the parish council will take steps to assign the lease over to this new body once it is established. I would like to thank the members of the Parish Council Woodland committee (Mark, Andy, Mary, Ray) and particularly Tanya Pepin for her support of this initiative.

The Parish Council continues to work on behalf of all residents with respect to road maintenance and traffic issues. We continually petition for repairs to our roads with pot holes and kerb stones an ongoing problem and are also trying to resolve the water problem on High Street which is proving difficult to resolve. We have had a request from the residents in The Coombs, Padbury Road for the current 50 MPH speed limit to be reduced to 40 MPH which the council fully supports. Since Buckinghamshire County Council have concluded their last county-wide review the formal process to request a speed limit change is very expensive, therefore the Parish Council are currently investigating other ways this can be achieved.

I am very pleased to report that the village now has access to super-fast broadband, now that Openreach have finally equipped the village with a fibre connection to the exchange. This has lifted our broadband speeds to 36MBps which makes video streaming possible. It is also a major benefit to any businesses and home-workers based in the village which is vital to our local economy. I am aware, however, that not all houses in parish are able to benefit from such service and would be interested to hear from anyone who feels they need support in petitioning for better broadband.

On a similar subject, I would like to publicise the Parish Council website ([thornboroughvillage.co.uk](http://thornboroughvillage.co.uk) or [thornboroughparish.co.uk](http://thornboroughparish.co.uk)) which we want to be the go-to place for news, information and events for the Parish. If there are any additions to the Events Calendar, please send them to [tpcadmin@thornboroughvillage.co.uk](mailto:tpcadmin@thornboroughvillage.co.uk) for inclusion.

Thornborough News continues to be a vibrant publication and many thanks to Rod for his tireless work in producing the magazine on a monthly basis. Thanks also to the contributors for their input without

whom it would not be possible. The Parish Council is pleased to support Thornborough News as a vital part of our community.

Planning for building and development continues to be a concern for the Parish Council. While we are happy to support householders and local businesses who require permission to improve their properties and diversify their business, we are determined to ensure the essential character of our Parish is maintained. The lack of a Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan causes a lot of concern as it leaves us susceptible to speculative development of the type that our neighbours in Winslow have been fighting. The Thornborough Parish Council will continue to monitor development of the VALP and review whether a formal Neighbourhood Plan will be appropriate for the Parish to ensure we are adequately protected. AVDC, who are the responsible body for our local planning permission requests, have not helped us by stopping production of paper copies of plans but at least their Planning Portal appears to be working better now than it did previously.

The Parish Council unfortunately had to raise our precept in response to rising costs this year. We agreed to a minimal rise of only 99p per annum at Band D. This additional funding will help the Parish Council ensure we continue to fund the services we are responsible for (Sports Pavilion, street lighting, grass cutting, dog waste bins, playground upkeep) but also enable us to support the community amenities including the Village Hall, Post Office and Friendship Club and Pre-School. We end the year with finances showing a net balance of £27,503.74. With repairs to the playground required urgently and the prospect of requiring a Neighbourhood Plan, this amount should be adequate at best.

Finally I would like to thank all the councillors for all their hard work and support this year: Ray Goodger, Charlotte Moore, Melanie Staff and Mary Taylor; and also Andy Spurr who is an excellent Vice-Chair always happy to fill my role when I am unable to. Also to Maggie Beach who is a tireless clerk and an invaluable source of procedural expertise and historical knowledge.

Since losing Mark Cole who has been recently elected to Buckingham Town Council, we are in need of a new councillor. I would particularly like to encourage representation from the east of the village (Thornhill area) or the Coombs who are not represented at present.