

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting for Cottered and Throcking will take place on Tuesday 18th May starting at 8pm in the Village Hall immediately after the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council (7pm) and all are welcome to attend either or both meetings. To help speed up the APM the Chairman's Report is printed below and will be taken as read.

Chairman's Report 2009 – 2010

Meetings

The Parish Council (PC) held a total of 6 formal meetings throughout the year these were interspersed with progress and site inspection meetings, whenever the need arose. In addition to their own meetings, councillors and often the Clerk, attend various seminars and meetings in order to be aware of changes in legislation and other issues that may affect our area.

The main issues dealt with by the PC during the past year fell into the following categories: -

Planning Applications

During the 10 months from May 2009 to March 2010 the PC considered a total of 24 Planning Applications. This number contrasts with only 11 reviewed last year.

Traffic / Parking

Traffic and parking is a continuing concern for the majority of people in the village and the PC has continued to try and alleviate the effects.

After many years the fourth flashing speed warning sign was installed. It should be remembered that it is thanks to the active body of villagers, who raised the original finance that the signs now exist. In addition to the new sign Hertfordshire Highways introduced the traffic control scheme along the bend in the A507. This scheme was achieved with the aid of much support from our local County and District Councillors.

Village Housekeeping

One of the most visually obvious responsibilities of the PC is that of maintaining the village greens. A large slice of the annual precept (budget to spend) is expended on cutting and maintaining the greens, the trees, the playing field equipment and seats etc. As well as the responsibility for maintaining the village greens the Parish Council are also the Trustees of the Recreation Ground Charity and are responsible to the Charities Commission for the operation of this Trust.

Other Events

This time last year we were expecting the National Air Traffic Services (NATS) to implement changes to the aircraft flight paths in this area. Many people considered that these changes were likely to be detrimental to our environment and many objections were raised.

At a similar time last year the possibility of establishing Travellers sites in the area was raised. Both these issues were strongly opposed by the Parish Council and the relevant meetings and protest documentation and general networking activities were actively pursued. At this time both these issues appear to have been "put on hold" and it remains to be seen what happens after the forthcoming general election.

Looking Ahead

One issue that has been apparent for many years is the lack of car parking space in Cottered and one proposal considered about 10 years ago was to construct parking bays along the northern side of the A507, opposite The Crescent. This land is owned by Hertfordshire Highways and a tentative informal approach to them has suggested that they may consider this but Cottered would definitely have to fund the work. Unfortunately such a scheme is likely to cost thousands of pounds, although it should be remembered that Cottered has a very proud record of raising large amounts of money for items the Community really want. The superb Village Hall and the four speed signs bear witness to what can be achieved when we all cooperate together.

The PC will also continue to strive to maintain the “housekeeping” and general well being of the village and community.

The Parish Councillors are very fortunate in having two permanent part time staff members, Joan Diales as Clerk and Eddie Hayden as Litter Picker. The PC is also very thankful for other help it receives, such as the internal audit carried out by Bill Pooley and the Parish Footpath work performed by Dr Roger Gomm.

The Councillors also wish to convey their sincere thanks to all those people who help us throughout the year.

Bryan Pitman