

## Twyford Parish Council – Chairman’s Report May 2015

As always I must thank my fellow Councillors for their assistance and inputs during another challenging year for the Parish Council.

As in each year since 2010 the spectre of HS2 has hung over the area and, regrettably, it shows no sign of disappearing. Indeed there is a strong argument that says with the return of a majority Conservative administration on 7<sup>th</sup> May may hasten efforts by the government to push this project ahead more rapidly. This area together with the rest of Buckinghamshire was to have enjoyed the presence of the Select Committee during the latter part of the week ending 22<sup>nd</sup> May but this has now been postponed until some later date, in July probably. The reasons for this postponement can only be speculated upon but one SC member was not returned and a Labour member is said to have expressed a desire to be replaced. It is also the case that a further set of Additional Provisions is expected in June or July so, should these affect Buckinghamshire, this may be an additional reason for the delayed meeting.

Another long running issue that has emerged again during the past year is that of the possible development of houses on part of the Allotments field. The owners of the field O&H Properties have, through a development company Urban Self Build, been planning a scheme to build on this field and the Parish Council has met with USB on a number of occasions. During these meetings USB has shared some of their thoughts with the PC and they attended a meeting in November last to bring forward their latest plans. Members of the public who live adjacent to the field attended this meeting which was animated.

As a result of this meeting USB staged an exhibition of their plan in the Village Hall and the Parish Council held a rather poorly attended Public Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> April to ask for input from the village. Because of the low turnout it is difficult to say how the village at large reacts to the proposal and next steps will be discussed at the business meeting following the Annual Meeting.

The Parish Council has decided that it is now appropriate to apply for Planning Permission for change of use to enable the Burial Ground to be extended. However, the application may not be made until a geophys examination of the area has taken place to supplement the archaeological survey already undertaken. Progress in this regard may be dependent on cost.

The PC has also been in discussion with the Cricket Club and involving the Football Club and School about the CC’s desire to extend and upgrade the pavilion. The current status of this is that plans have been drawn up and now discussions of the financial viability of the project are scheduled prior to discussing the plans with the adjacent home owners and with the village at large.

Thanks to the efforts of Loo Blackburn and other concerned residents and with the very welcome financial assistance of the Winslow Rotary Club a defibrillator has been installed at the Village Hall. Given the village's distance from hospitals and the time it might take an ambulance to arrive the availability of a defibrillator in the village could literally prove a life saver.

The Parish Council is planning to improve its website and general manner of communication. A website developer has been instructed in outline and it is proposed that the current PC Notice Board be given over the general use with the now defunct BT kiosk being kitted out with notice boards.

As ever the PC takes complaints and issues in respect of the road condition to Transport for Buckinghamshire. Some small success is achieved but it is very clear that village roads, apart from those with a classification, have a very low priority for spending so we do not think we can expect to see any great improvement over the coming years.

The Parish Council was asked if the village would take over the task of grass cutting in the village, again this is currently a responsibility of TfB. There was a small financial inducement offered but, in the event, it was decided that to do so was not currently in the best interests of the village.

AVDC has decided to make some quite significant changes in the manner in which planning applications are notified to parishes. This has not, so far, worked without hitches and certain applications have only come to the attention of the PC very shortly before their expiry dates. The PC has, however, responded to all applications of which it has been aware and where it felt a negative position should be taken. It has not, however, always been successful in persuading the district council of the validity of its views.