**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT 2013-2014**

I started last year’s report by referring to frustration over how long it takes for certain issues and initiatives to come to fruition. Looking back over the past twelve months, this theme is still evident, though I am pleased to say that progress has been made in a number of areas.

**Development of Taylor’s Yard and Old Station Yard**. At last there is a flurry of activity at Taylor’s yard and, as I write, houses seem to be springing up like mushrooms, which is very heartening to see. Conversely, the development of Old Station Yard has stalled, though the Council is doing its best to try and help move the project forward.

**Bullington Cross Wind Farm**. The Parish Council is very grateful to all those who participated in the Wind Farm Survey which resulted in 80 percent voting against the proposal, 16 percent in favour , and 4 percent undecided or neutral. The date for EDF Energy’s planning application to be determined by Winchester City Council’s Planning Development Committee has steadily moved to the right. Additional information was provided by EDF which the Council considered at an Emergency Meeting in January and comments were subsequently submitted to the City Council. The latest date for a decision to be made is later this month or early April.

**Gratton Trust**. Following a change in Chairmanship of the Trust, the Parish Council and the Trust have been working more closely together, with the joint aim of providing excellent sporting and leisure facilities on the Gratton playing fields and surrounding area. The initiative by the Parish Council to set up a skate park has been subsumed into the Trust’s overall plan which makes good sense, but the Council intends providing support by purchasing play equipment and continuing to give annual grants for maintenance.

**Parish Plan**. I regret to say that this stalled in the Autumn, following the withdrawal of the lead participant due to personal circumstances. However, the Plan is under way again and, by the time you read this, you should have had a chance to complete the questionnaire. Thereafter, the results will be analysed and compilation of the Plan itself will start.

**Local Businesses**. In one of the West Dever magazine articles several months ago, I urged parishioners to make good use of local businesses. I do hope that you took the message to heart and now always ‘think local’ first.

**Flooding**. The Council has been working with Hampshire County Council’s Highway Department to tackle a number of flood hotspots around the Parish. Some have been resolved, whilst work continues elsewhere, particularly on the old A30 which still presents a hazard at times. However, it is worth adding that the situation is exacerbated by the excessive speed of some drivers who blatantly travel at well over 60mph. The Council has made a bid for the 40mph speed limit to be extended from Sutton Scotney to the entrance to Norton Park Hotel, which it is hoped would help to prevent potentially serious accidents in the Cranbourne area. I hope you have also encountered (and heeded!) the mobile flashing speed signs which have been placed around the Parish over the past year.

Of course, February was dominated by flooding in Sutton Scotney which caused misery for those residents whose houses were flooded. It was really heartening to see so many people, young and not so young, coming forward to help with deployment of sandbags, traffic control and various other tasks. A big ‘thank you’ also to the Parish Clerk, Sue Hedges, for doing such a sterling job in directing operations over a number of days. Since then, we have been working in concert with engineers from Highways who have been examining the pipes running from the Victoria Hall car park culvert down to the river. Any blockages or build-up of silt will be blasted through to give a higher flow rate of future floodwater.

**Additional Councillors**. We are still looking for additional Councillors so, if you would like to make a difference in OUR community, please come and join us. Contact Sue Hedges, the Parish Clerk at wonstonpc@hotmail.co.uk or on 01962 761937 for further details.

**Finally**, a big ‘thank you’ to our volunteer Parish Councillors who manage to find time in their busy lives to serve the community – Duncan Traill, John Holt, John Polak (now Chairman of the Gratton Trust), Lorna Close-Brooks, Lucy Dowson, Nick Thuilliez (now stood down from the Council), and Tessa Barrett. Also to Sue Hedges who does a magnificent job as Parish Clerk.

Once again, I am very grateful for the excellent support given by our three Winchester City Councillors, Stephen Godfrey, Barry Lipscomb and Malcolm Wright, and by our Hampshire County Council representative, Jackie Porter.

…………….and please don’t forget to take a regular look at the Parish website at [www.wonston.parish.hants.gov.uk](http://www.wonston.parish.hants.gov.uk) !

Very best wishes

Iain Henderson

REMINDER

**WONSTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Sutton Scotney, Wonston, Stoke Charity, Hunton, Norton

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**ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY**

**WEDNESDAY 12th March 2014**

**VICTORIA HALL - 7.30pm**

ALL RESIDENTS OF SUTTON SCOTNEY, WONSTON, STOKE CHARITY, HUNTON, AND NORTON ARE VERY WELCOME. COME AND AIR YOUR VIEWS ON LOCAL ISSUES AND THE CHAIRMAN’S REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL’S PAST YEAR.

 **GUEST SPEAKER**

**Chris Robinson, Chief Exeutive,**

**Naomi House**

**To discuss imminent major refurbishment of Naomi House**

**Other topics for discussion:**

* **Update for the proposed Bullington Cross Wind Farm**
* **Development of Parish Plan**
* **Future for Gratton Playing Fields & Play Area**

ADDITIONALLY THERE WILL BE SOME BRIEF REPORTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS.

THE MEETING WILL BE FOLLOWED BY A GLASS OF WINE AND LIGHT REFRESHMENTS.

**PLEASE PUT 12TH MARCH IN YOUR DIARY**

Iain Henderson, Chairman, Wonston Parish Council, 18th February 2014