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Please note new email address for our clerk as shown above: viv.hartley3@btinternet.com

Update on development of South Northamptonshire

Alley Gardens Play Area Damage

For those people not already aware, the Parish Council is saddened and disappointed to have to report incidents of criminal damage to the Alley Gardens Play Area on Church Lane. The 'Elephant Springer' had its seat badly damaged, various bolts removed, and brackets twisted, making it unsafe for use; and the wooden climbing frame had several panels on the slide tower kicked in. People from this Parish spent more than 30 years trying to get the play area established, and many people put an enormous amount of time, effort and money, into making a bright, safe and happy play area for the young children of our village. The repairs are likely to cost the Parish Council just over £800. This ultimately will be paid for by YOU, the people who live in the village, as it comes from your Council Tax. You will be acutely aware of the pressures on public finance, and repairing wanton vandalism is such a wasteful way of having to spend parish money. This is, of course, in addition to the ongoing costs of insurance, inspection, maintenance, checking and reporting, grass-cutting etc. The Police have obviously been notified, but if you have any information about these incidents which may, sadly, involve young people from our village, the Parish Council would be keen to hear from you. We have received some information and these details have been passed on to the Police. Rest assured that if sufficient evidence is forthcoming we will not hesitate to press charges against the individuals concerned.

As they pledged they would, the new Coalition Government is making major reforms to the Strategic planning process. This will directly affect the future development of Northamptonshire. Your Parish Councillors are monitoring the emerging changes with other Parish Councillors involved in the Nene Ridge Parishes group (which played such an active part last year in responding to the proposals for the development of Northampton South East), as are our District and County Councillors. Some definite changes have been made but there are still many uncertainties about the future of planning agencies, and their proposals, which were central to the former Government's pursuit of massive housing growth in our area. We want to keep you informed about this emerging picture as definitely as we can. So what can we tell you with some degree of confidence?

Billing Road Traffic

A number of residents in the Billing Rd area showed their frustration at both the speed of traffic passing through this area of the parish and the continual flouting of the HGV restrictions. They very kindly gathered names and submitted a petition which the Parish Council forwarded to the Police with a request for enforcement action. The Police undertook a number of speed check visits and we are awaiting the response from these shortly. However, we are aware of a number of companies in the area who repeatedly flout the HGV order. One of these we see regularly in the parish is 'Mick George Skips'. The police have contacted the company on our behalf and advised them of this breach. Their Transport Manager was very helpful and advised us that he would be meeting with the offending drivers to remind them that the Parish is 'off limits' UNLESS they are delivering in the restricted zone. He advised us that any driver flouting this would be liable to dismissal. So, if you continue to see this company breaching the regulation please advise us of the date, time and, if possible, the vehicle registration number, and we will ask the Officer concerned to take the matter further. We will look at other companies in due course to continue to tackle this matter.

A massive reduction of the previous Government's housing growth targets is now certain. The 12 local authorities, including our own South Northamptonshire Council (SNC), within the (now revoked) 'Milton Keynes South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy's' 'Growth Area' (that was given a target of providing land for 225,000 new homes by 2025), are now reducing their own targets for new housing. These reductions, as we understand it, are to housing growth which they perceive to be appropriate and proper for their own communities' existing and future needs. This follows instructions to them in July from the Communities Secretary Eric Pickles to disregard targets set out by the former Government in the, now abolished, Regional Spatial Strategies. It looks certain, from reports by SNC, that the changes already made include the revocation of the so-called 'Northampton Implementation Area' and a commitment by national government to the protection and maintenance of Green Belt. We were also told, even before the change of government, that the proposal for an A45 / M1 Link Road had been subject to 'technical modelling' which had disproved its value to the point that it was 'virtually scrapped'. This is a specific point on which we would like to get more information.

Our Parish Councillors are meeting soon with Roy Boulton, the Senior Planning Officer of the County Council, and will seek more certainty about the impact of the wide range of changes to planning and development that are being made by the new Government. We will report further on what we learn in future issues of the Newsletter.

For now, the Council continues to value the enormous effort that our community made last year in resisting the scale and nature of the Growth Proposals by the former Government in which so many of you played an active part. We remain convinced that this helped to contribute towards the massive reduction in development likely to result from the reforming actions of the new Government which also include a pledge to return planning powers to local councils and communities.

Visit the Village website for regularly updated information on these matters: address at top of page

Sport Unlimited returns to South Northamptonshire!

An initiative aimed at getting more young people fit and active – *Sports Unlimited* – is returning to South Northamptonshire with an amazing 10 – 12 weeks of FREE taster sessions. These sessions offer young people the chance to participate in a variety of sports and related activities including Badminton at Sponne School, Golf at Silverstone and Delapre golf courses, Fencing at Magdalen College School Brackley, and Street Dance at the Towcester Centre for Leisure. Additionally, Sponne, Caroline Chisholm and Champion Schools will be offering the Brazilian style indoor football, Futsai, as an after school activity. Previous *Sports Unlimited* projects have seen young people participate in Dodgeball, Rock It Ball and a Girls Football project which used Towcester Centre for Leisure's new 3G pitch. *Sport Unlimited* is a Sport England initiative.

Furze Road

Following a representation from a resident about the state of the pavements in Furze Road, the Parish Council asked the Highways Dept to inspect these. This has been done and an order has been raised for footway patching which will probably be programmed for around November.

Memorial tree

The Houghtons and Brafield Local History Society are to plant a Whitebeam tree on The Green in memory of Richard Mackaness. It will be placed to the south west of the telegraph pole.

Police Matters

Ruth Kentigern - Fox attended the Safer Community Team Meeting held on 15th Sept 2010 on behalf of the Parish Council. Due to the increase in car related crime across the whole area, it was decided to make this the priority for the next quarter. The Police have given the following advice:-

- Put your vehicle in a garage if you have one available.
- On entering the house secure the door behind you.
- Keep all keys in a safe place, away from doors, letterboxes and windows where they can be seen. People have stolen keys without entering the premises. Do not leave keys on open view at home or work
- Use the security that you have, that is to say if you have a house alarm then use it.
- Do not leave valuables on show in your car
- Do not leave your car unattended with the keys in the ignition. This is particularly relevant as the colder weather approaches and people tend to defrost their windscreens by leaving the engine running.

Another area discussed was Children and Social Networking sites. An increased number of calls are received by the Police concerning bullying on these sites so if your children use Facebook or any other social networking sites, (despite age restrictions), please be aware of this growing issue. Next meeting 1st December : If you have any issues that you would like Ruth to take forward contact her on - Tel 890332.

Village Pond

The Parish Council is very grateful to Steve Pittams (Green Road) who volunteered to dredge our village pond when it had completely dried up earlier this year. Sadly, because of delays in organising insurances etc. we were overtaken by torrential rains and 'missed the boat!' We do hope Steve will be willing to carry out this work for us at sometime in the future.

Website

There have been over 25,000 hits on our Village Website in the last three years. Any local information for inclusion on the site is always welcome. Email : content@brafieldonthegreen.org.uk

Next Parish Council Meeting:
Monday 15th November at 7.30 p.m. in the Sargeant Memorial Hall Brafield

Members of the public are most welcome to attend any meeting
At the start of the Parish Council meeting, time is set aside for public enquiries