

Chair's Annual Report 2008 – 2009

As it comes to the end of another Council year, Campbell Park Parish Council has a lot to reflect on, and be proud of. Our recognition as a Quality Council is something everyone in the Parish Council and within the Parish, can take pride in. To be one of a few Parishes in Milton Keynes to have attained Quality Status shows our commitment to ensuring that you, as our parishioners, are well represented and can have confidence in your first tier of Government.



By holding local meetings in conjunction with our partner agencies (Thames Valley Police, Milton Keynes Council and others) we have sought to ensure that we not only come out to you with our public meetings and open door policy, but allow you access to the relevant people that can help make a difference. It's through such important partnerships with other organisations that we believe we can benefit our residents.

With this in mind, Campbell Park Parish Councillors continue to be represented in the local community and wider organisations, from trustees to Neighbourhood Action Groups. We strive to ensure our residents are well represented in all forums.

The development of a business plan over the coming months will help influence and direct our thinking for years to come. This sense of direction has been influenced by feedback from our residents, and the plan will set out key objectives for us to meet those challenges.

Our role as a Community Leader looks set to become of greater importance in the coming months. With proposed new powers being delegated to Parish Councils from the Government and with a regeneration project in one of our wards, I believe that Campbell Park Parish Council is well placed to take on such roles, and address challenges. We have accomplished a great deal so far, and in order to maintain our standard we must strive to be consistent as a Quality Council and take pride in what we do, and why we do it, so you, as our residents can enjoy the benefits.

The annual fun days we organise in each ward in summer attract increasing numbers of children in spite of the weather last year. And we are pleased that an increasing number of organisations want to join us in providing fun for local children and families in 2009.



Last summer we also worked with Whitecap Leisure, local schools and other areas of the community to recognise children within the community, who, in various ways, cared for others. They were rewarded with a day of water sports on Willen Lake.

We refurbished the Oldbrook Centre last summer to make it a more attractive venue for community activities and "fit for purpose" in the 21st century and were pleased to appoint Woughton Leisure Trust to manage the Centre for us. We are now trying to find new uses for the old pavilion and depot alongside the Green.

The Green itself presents challenges. There is an occasional and mysterious underground source of flooding at the northern edge of the Green. Over the years it has steadily got worse and we are trying to establish the cause and to find a solution. The Green is a very popular site for football. Unfortunately it is too popular and beginning to show signs of damage from over-use. We are going to have to tackle this or the Green will become a bare patch of earth. We ask you, the community, to understand this and help us to restore this valuable community asset.

There is much green space within the Parish some of it the responsibility of Milton Keynes Council, some of the Parks Trust, and some the Parish Council. We have appointed Marcus Young Contractors to maintain that which is our responsibility.

Our two allotment sites, at Willen and Woolstone, are fully occupied and we have a small waiting list. When the population of the Parish grows with the development in Campbell Park ward, we will increase the number of allotments available.

Residents of Fishermead know that this is one of the older estates in the new City. We are delighted that Milton Keynes Council has recognised and named Fishermead as one of the first three estates in MK to have been identified for regeneration. This will be a long-term project involving the whole community and the Parish Council will play its part in this work.

With many others in the community we fought the closure of the Post Office on Fishermead but to no avail.

However we were very pleased that, again with others, our efforts to get back a Post Office at Willen were successful.

The Parish Council invites residents of estates to Neighbourhood Meetings. We arrange one each quarter alternating between the east and west of the area.

We are represented on the 2 NAGs (Neighbourhood Action Groups) within the Parish and support the work they do to improve your area. Both we and the NAGs continue to tackle fly-tipping and litter which blight our area. Over time we hope to be able to persuade people to become more aware of their surroundings and to be more conscious of the effect their behaviour can have on their community and others.



We were pleased to be invited to a public meeting called by local Somali residents to consider what they might do to achieve greater integration of, and create activities for, their community. The Council has allowed the use of the small room in the Oldbrook depot to enable them to get the project "off the ground".

Now that spring is with us – hopefully – you will be able to see the benefits of a bulb-planting initiative in which we worked with members of the public on Springfield and Woolstone to plant thousands of spring bulbs. We have laid a wood-chip path alongside parts of the Green on Oldbrook and have planted bulbs in that area.



We work with Thames Valley Police and have regular contact with their officers and PCSOs. Their commitment to our feelings of safety and security on our estates deserves special mention.

We have made grants to a number of community groups, partners etc over the last year including Willen Church, Penwith School, MK Community Mediation and the Fishermead Hostel.

We worked with 'On the Verge' to introduce Public Art on Fishermead and Oldbrook. Parishioners ranging from school children to the elderly became involved in photographing their areas as they saw it, and this work was transformed in to large colourful banners by international artists.

Lastly, we are very much aware of the impact of houses in multiple occupation on our estates. We recognise the need for HiMOs but are concerned that they should not become too dominant on our estates and that those which are allowed are properly and considerately managed. This is not easy but with Milton Keynes Council we believe we are making a difference.

The report gives a flavour of what has been achieved in 2008, we recognise that 2009 will bring many challenges, and as a Parish we look forward to meeting these challenges and continuing to serve our community.

Cllr John Goss
Chair
Campbell Park Parish Council