

OLD STRATFORD PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

Chairman's Report

Welcome to this edition of our Newsletter. I'm afraid that there is not much news to write about but I will try to bring you up to date with what is happening in Old Stratford.

The school, we have had a meeting with representatives of the school governors and the head, together with South Northamptonshire Planners, the Developers and our District Councillor, Mary Clark. The local Education Authority had been invited but they declined to attend. The developers had no new proposals to put forward for discussion, the Education Authority failed to make any justification for a school replacement so without a scheme to focus any discussion on, only general planning issues were discussed, which were extremely interesting but did not help anyone understand what was happening with the school. It was interesting to note that the result of the opinion poll taken at the display at the school in July 2011, showed that the village were receptive to the idea of a new school but had no appetite for any development to fund it.

The fields between Old Stratford and Passenham have been bought by Milton Keynes Parks Trust and they say that they have no intention to develop the land. We have asked them to consider using some of the land for allotments and they are now considering that.

Both Mary Clark and Allen Walker have been very supportive to the village and I offer our thanks to them. Mary's Saturday surgeries have been a success and I will try to have myself or

APRIL 2012

another councillor around at the same time to be of assistance to you as currently the clerk attends to answer any queries.

We are still intent on producing a village plan, which is the first step in producing a Neighbourhood Plan. It will give us (the village) more involvement with planning issues in the future. We have just about completed the questionnaire that we intend to send to all of you for your views, When you receive them please do complete them and let us have them back. It is really important that the plan reflects all of your views.

I will end with my usual plea to invite you to come along to our monthly meetings held on the second Tuesday in the month at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall to participate in our meetings.

Richard Whittaker
Chairman

OLD STRAFORD & PASSENHAM PARISH PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE

After the Public launch of the 2011 Localism Act, which received Royal Assent on the 15th November 2011, Old Stratford Parish Council (including Passenheim) have decided that it is now time to generate and reinstate the workings of its Parish Plan. Originally the Plan was set-up in 2002 and at this time the Parish Council issued a Parish Plan Questionnaire. As the needs of Old Stratford and the hamlet of Passenheim have changed since 2002, it was felt that the questionnaire should be re-issued to every household. Completion of this questionnaire will assist the Parish Council in developing its new Parish Plan.

Your Council is developing a revised questionnaire and would be very appreciative if every household completes it when delivered.

Section one should be completed by one member of the household

and section two may be completed by the person completing section one for all members living at that address.

Questionnaires will be delivered to every household in Old Stratford and Passenham and everybody will be given time to complete it. When completed it will be collected by members of the Parish Council.

Once all questionnaires have been collected, they will be analysed and the Parish Plan developed around the answers you provide. It is vital that you all take part in this as this will shape the needs and aspirations of the village for years to come.

The questionnaires will be issued shortly and the time given to complete will be given with them.

Thanking everybody in anticipation of everybody's help.
Old Stratford (with Passenham) Parish Council.

TADD (Towcester Area Door to Door)

Volunteer Drivers Wanted

We are urgently looking for volunteer drivers prepared to give a few hours per week to help the local community by driving people to medical appointments.

Drivers are reimbursed 40p per mile to medical appointments.

Andy Thorpe

TADD: TEL. 01327 810300

Office Hours 9.00am to 1.00pm Monday to Friday

News from Old Stratford Primary School March 2012

It is now almost a year ago since we welcomed so many of our older friends and neighbours to the street party held in our school playground to celebrate the Royal Wedding. As a wedding gift, we sent the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge a DVD of the school singing a special royal wedding song. In November we were delighted to receive a letter of thanks from Buckingham Palace and photograph of the happy couple, which are now displayed in the school entrance. We hope that many of you will be able to join us for our Diamond Jubilee Celebrations taking place in early June. Please contact the school if you have any memories or photos of how Old Stratford celebrated the Queen's Coronation in 1952.

Many of you will also have memories of school dinners from your own school days. Mine seem to revolve around green gingham tablecloths, duchess potatoes-brown and crispy on the outside, fluffy on the inside and chocolate sponge with pink custard. In September 2011, after many years of packed lunches at our school and having meals delivered in hot, we were delighted to formally open our new school kitchen "pod", which produces freshly cooked healthy meals every day. Our menus reflect a more multi-cultural approach to our diet, with a range of very popular Indian and Italian dishes alongside more traditional roast dinners and shepherd's pie.

Another very welcome addition to our school this year has been a Comenius Assistant, Lukas Molnar, from Slovakia. Lukas has joined our staff for the year, and is working as a teaching assistant, funded through the British Council. He is also teaching all pupils from the age of 6 lessons in Slovak language and culture. We are also making links via the internet with pupils in Slovakian schools.

As you may know, the school is very proud of its International Schools Award, which recognises the efforts we make to ensure that pupils at our school are educated to be global citizens. We are delighted that we can all benefit from Mr Molnar's contributions to

our school's inter-cultural understanding.

Since the amalgamation of Kingsbrook and Roade schools in September 2011 to form the new Elizabeth Woodville School, heads of local primary schools have been very actively involved in working with Pamela Hutchinson, head of EWS and her senior management team. We have a joint responsibility to provide the best possible education for every child who lives in this and other local villages and intend to work together even more closely in the future to achieve this aim.

And finally, you may be wondering what has happened about the proposal to build a new primary School in Old Stratford. Plans are still at a very early stage, with a recent meeting between the developers, Persimmon, and planning officers of South Northants Council, also attend by representatives of the school and Parish Council. Persimmon are currently seeking further information from Northants County Council regarding the number of children living in Old Stratford who will be needing a school place in the next few years. I am sure that we will be hearing more news in the near future.

Kind regards

Gill Tween
Headteacher

Old Stratford Pre-school

Old Stratford Pre-School is a community Pre-school run by a parental committee. The Pre-school meets at Old Stratford Community Hall on Deanshanger Road. It accepts children aged 2 years until school entry.

The pre-school offers sessions 5 days a week during term-time and these can be either full or half days.

Sessions are:- Breakfast club 8.00am till 8.30am,
Morning session 8.30am till 11.30am,
Lunch Club 11.30am till 12.00pm,
Afternoon session 12.00pm till 3.00pm,
Full day 8.30am till 3.00pm.

Each child must enrol for a minimum of two sessions per week. Further sessions, lunch clubs or breakfast clubs can be arranged as availability allows.

Please visit our website for further details at:

www.oldstratfordpreschoolplaygroup.co.uk

or phone Dawn Higgs on 01908 260664

Please support our Pre-school – we are a charity and all funds raised go towards improving the Preschool.

Our open day this year will be held on:

**Saturday 9th June 2012 at the Community Hall,
Deanshanger Road, Old Stratford from 9am - 11am.**

Highways issues

A reminder that **highway defects** such as pot holes, blocked drains and other highway defects can be reported to Street Doctor 0845 601 1113 or via the Northants County Council website (www.northamptonshire.gov.uk).

However, the best course of action is to contact the Parish Clerk Derek Everett on 01908 569053 or via the website www.oldstratford.org.uk who will do it for you and can keep tabs on repairs or works required on behalf of the Parish Council. This also applies to any **street lighting** defects.

Dog Fouling Continues to be a messy issue especially on pavements and verges. The football field and areas around play areas are already designated 'poop-a-scoop' areas attracting heavier fixed penalty fines. As a dog owner myself I would like to think that everyone picks up after their dog (even on public rights of way across fields) but I'm not that naive. In Oxfield Park can we at least keep it off the mown edges to the paths because children play there.

Falcon Drive open space is now becoming a serious issue

The Parish Council have installed new dog bins at considerable cost. Litter bins can also be used (normally if double wrapped) so there should be no excuse.

Litter The thorny issue of litter around the shop and the route to Kingsbrook School and other areas continues to attract adverse comments, even where we have installed new litter bins. With national campaigns to 'Keep Britain Tidy' A kindly word or thought could help, or show by example and make Old Stratford a more attractive place to live.

Derek M Everett MILCM
Clerk

Old Stratford Neighbourhood Watch

Just a few reminders on House security.

Never leave keys in locks overnight and keep keys out of sight. If you have a chain it should only be used before opening the door and not left on all the time. Ground floor windows and those that can be reached by a flat roof should have locks. Keep front and back doors locked even when you are at home. When going on Holiday ask a neighbour to remove any mail from the letterbox, open and close your curtains and maybe park a car on the drive, you could do this for them when they go away, it's called being Neighbourly.

Outside.

With good weather on the way make sure you don't leave tools around, lock them away in the shed or garage. Try to keep hedges and fences under a meter high to maximize visibility. If you are re-newing paths think about gravel, burglars don't like the noise! Sensor lights with PIR detector will come on as soon as anyone walks into the beam. Just a few reminders to keep us safe.

The new number for reporting anything to the police is 101. This is for non emergencies. I have used it several times and it seems to work well **REMEMBER NON EMERGENCIES 101.**

For an **EMERGENCY dial 999** (e.g. Burglary in progress. Car accident and someone is hurt or an attack etc.)

Should you see anything suspicious and not wish to phone the police please, rather than do nothing phone me and I will deal with it. Jacki 01908 562677.

Jacki Ibell Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator.

**2012 Police Open Day at Wooton Hall Park HQ
Saturday 12 May 11 – 4pm**

Message from Cllr Mary Clarke—District Councillor

Dear Resident

It has been my privilege to serve Old Stratford & Passenheim since May 2011. My background as Leader and Councillor for the past thirteen years has helped me understand the needs of the ward, deal with your case work and work to resolve your issues promptly. At the start of the year, I listened to your views about the need for improvement to the local support infrastructure and your desire to preserve what is special about the lovely villages of Old Stratford & Passenheim. In this connection, I continue to work closely with your Parish Council and the County Council to support their efforts to realise the much needed changes required.

You also expressed concern about the air quality associated with the heavy traffic on Towcester Road and London Road and I have arranged for the Council to monitor this.

Planning, transport and parking issues have figured very highly in your subsequent letters. As the District Council has already started working with other communities to prepare Neighbourhood Plans to address these complex matters, I have asked our officers to work with you and the Parish Council to do likewise. This would provide a vehicle for you to set out what you want to see happen around the key issues.

Old Stratford has been subjected to significant unplanned development in the recent past. It is against this background that I have taken up a number planning matters on your behalf. Including but not limited to the successful appeal against the proposed development of a further 31 and then 15 dwellings on 'Land East of the Meadows'. I am also working with both Northampton County Council and Milton Keynes Council to address the cross border transport related issues. Please let me know if you have any specific matters you would like me to address.

A neighbourhood plan like the one SNC helped Roade prepare will make a difference by developing an integrated approach to delivering local services and it will act as a focus for lobbying for more resources for the community. This is an opportunity to make your voice heard and shape services to meet your needs. I do hope that we can work together to make a difference.

I continue to work on enforcement and keeping Old Stratford & Passenham Tidy. I have arranged for a number of rubbish clean up operations and I have revised the frequency of street cleaning here so as to improve things. As the local area looks much nicer if we stay on top of things, I would appreciate it if you would let me know if standards are slipping.

As a ward Councillor, I have helped many of you in a wide range of ways. I have dealt with a variety of casework by visiting residents at home and holding monthly surgeries in the Memorial Hall, Old Stratford on the last Saturday of each month. My next Surgery is on the 28th April 2012.

This year has been one of the most challenging in my time as a local Councillor. We continue to receive reduced budget settlements from central government. However we remain committed to providing cost effective services to the community we serve. We understand that individuals and businesses are facing challenging economic times and have decided to freeze our council tax again in 2011/2012. We will continue to find other, innovative ways to protect our services as far as possible.

I look forward to meeting you at the 'Annual Open Parish Meeting' or at one of my surgeries soon.

Best Wishes

Mary Clarke - Old Stratford Ward

Report from Andrea Leadsom MP

I thought I would take this opportunity to share with you my thoughts on this last year. It has certainly been a very busy year, locally, nationally and internationally.

I think we were all amazed by the Arab Spring. I said towards the beginning of last year that it is a dangerously fine line that foreign governments must tread in their efforts to try to help other nations. We had to make that decision with regards to Libya, whether to impose a no fly zone and whether to help arm Libyan rebels. I believe that Parliament made the right decision to intervene in Libya and whilst the road ahead will be hard, I hope there are brighter days ahead for Libya and the other countries that are going through transition to greater democracy. Where Syria is concerned, we have no mandate from the international community to provide military support, but continue to work for peace there.

We witnessed the tragic Japanese Tsunami that caused so much devastation and disruption, the appalling terror attacks in Norway and we were shocked by the phone hacking scandal. We also experienced the disgraceful behaviour of rioters in our towns and cities last summer. The right to freedom of speech and the right to protest are extremely important and should be protected at all cost; however, what we witnessed on the streets of some of our major cities was nothing more than greed that spread fear and intimidation through the thuggery of a minority. I was pleased MPs of all parties robustly condemned the violence and destruction.

However, 2011 also had some fabulous highlights: the Royal Wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge in April caught the attention of around 2 billion people worldwide and was a fantastic day that highlighted exactly what is great about Britain. The extra bank holiday was also well received! I am sure Britain's opportunity to host the Olympics this summer will offer a boost to morale as well as to our economy.

Last month I had the honour of being present in Westminster Hall as the Queen addressed Parliament on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee and a new stained glass window was unveiled in honour of her 60 years on the throne.

A key issue which has dominated the news has been the European Union. Greece, Ireland and Portugal have received bailouts as the sovereign debt crisis continued to sweep across Europe and it is difficult to see how and when this crisis will end. It is very clear that we were right never to join the Euro and events suggest that whatever happens, we almost certainly never should. I believe now is the right time for us to negotiate a better deal with Europe, and I am leading a project in Parliament to define what that relationship should be.

My work on the Treasury Select Committee has been focussed on creating a better and stronger regulatory system for banks. I continue to press the Government to do more to ensure greater bank competition – availability of finance to business remains poor.

2011 has also been a busy year in Northamptonshire. My campaign against High Speed Rail continues even though the Government have announced its intention to go ahead with the project. I have established the HS2 Compensation and Mitigation Forum which will meet on a regular basis to discuss campaign ideas and share information. The Secretary of State for Transport, officials from HS2 Ltd and experts who have worked on similar projects will be invited to address the group to answer questions and offer advice. If this project is to go ahead I am determined constituents will receive fair and timely compensation.

I remain committed to Localism and making sure local residents have a say on how their communities look and feel. I hope the Localism Act will go a long way to achieving this but I am still working with the Government to iron out some strong concerns. I am also working closely with the Department for Energy and Climate Change to look at alternatives to meet our energy security

needs other than onshore wind farms – I feel that there has been a shift in thinking and that these incredibly intrusive turbines are no longer as central to policy as under the previous government. Energy security is vital, but it's not clear onshore wind turbines can genuinely contribute to our long term security as they are extremely inefficient.

I attended some wonderful local events during the year including many school visits, trips to Museums including Sulgrave Manor and the new Towcester Museum as well as the Ironstone Railway Trust; I saw the soon to be restored Iron Trunk Aqueduct at Cosgrove, attended the opening of the fabulous new 'Wing' at Silverstone, met with many businesses and local charities, attended the Army Cadets Annual camp in Norfolk, the Wootton Walk in the Park, the Blakesley Show and the superb Remembrance Day Service at All Saints Church in Northampton, to name just a few highlights. I have enjoyed meeting lots of people out and about in the constituency as well as during the 12 advice surgeries and 12 drop in surgeries I held during the year at Towcester, Wootton and Brackley. I have also been delighted to host visits to Parliament from South Northamptonshire schools.

We have recently heard the Chancellor's Budget statement. I know these are difficult times for many in our economy but I am confident that the Government is on the right course to lead us to better and more prosperous times. Now is the time to stick to our programme of cuts with reforms that will lead to a better and more competitive future for Britain in an ever more global world.

Residents of Old Stratford have an open invitation to join me for a coffee in Westminster if you should ever find yourself there! Also if I can be of any help with events in the community or if you have a personal issue you would like to discuss with me, please do contact me through my Westminster office on 020 7219 7149.

With best wishes
Andrea

Tales from the Countryman

Well spring is round the corner, not that you would think so, some of the early spring flowers are well out already and temperatures were on the rise, hope that we are not in for a late shock. I have noticed that the Rooks are well on the way to having young and that birds in my garden are starting to pair up, Blackbirds and Thrushes. I still see the Red Kite occasionally pass over where I live and the Buzzards circling around the skies, great to see. I have seen the Sparrow Hawk around the gardens, easy pickings with sparrows and starlings about. I did notice that he had taken a Bullfinch as I found a partly dismantled carcass in the street the other day.

I was walking home late one night during October last year when a large dark shape appeared flying across the road in front of me, it was a Tawny Owl also it was carrying a large rat as its late night supper, a marvellous sight to behold not just the flight of the large owl but the fact that it was removing vermin, the rat.

During the summer months I was intrigued to see that the Oyster catchers had returned to breed on the sand banks of the lakes at Stony Stratford, yes I did say Oyster Catchers, two or three years ago I first saw them, while watching a leisurely game of cricket when all of a sudden these black and white birds suddenly appeared on the short grass around the boundary of the cricket ground, after a few minutes I realised that they in fact were Oyster Catchers. Also nesting there regularly for the past few years has been a pair of common Terns.

Over the years that these lakes have been there a varied assortment of bird life has either made its home there or just use them to breed and rear their young on them. I now regularly see a pair of Cormorants fly over or are feeding there, the occasional red and green Shank can be seen along with two or three pairs of little Plovers.

I have been interested of late in reading that the Buckingham Cannel Restoration Society are keen to re-open the old disused Buckingham Arm, from Cosgrove to Buckingham, mammoth task as much of the old route has been built on and a dual carriageway cuts right through it. I have been somewhat surprised to hear that they intend to open up the canal and run it parallel to the carriageway and enter the river Ouse. I find this intriguing, because during summer months the depth of water would not support the draught of a narrow boat. I commented to the Society this and asked them how they would overcome this problem, simple their reply, 'we would dredge the river so that it becomes deeper', fine but how will you dredge under the Grade 2* Listed river bridge at Old Stratford was my comment, again simple 'we would drag line it'. So what happens when you hit the Roman Ford under the bridge I replied, no problem, the reply, we would blow it up using dynamite, not many Cuckoos about last year of the feathered variety, did see and hear one or two, some of them are in some obscure places!

WHALLEY'S APPRENTICING CHARITY
(Stony Stratford, Cosgrove & Old Stratford)

Applicants of 16 years and over, can claim up to a maximum of £100 towards Books and Equipment required for their chosen profession.

For more information or application form:
please contact

Derek Everett the Parish Clerk on 01908 569053

News from the Community Hall

Another year has flown by and the Community Hall is as busy as ever! There is still a wide variety of groups which we hope offer something for everyone. Some groups have recently changed their times or dates so please have a look at the revised list or pick up a leaflet in the Hall foyer or speak to Lesley Peach (01908 307461).

If you are looking to get fit and active, why not come along to the new Boxercise class that is held on a Monday evening, or try the new Zumba dance craze on a Tuesday and Thursday evening. Both these activities offer a great workout and you will receive a warm welcome by everyone who attends. If you are in need of a little 'assistance' before trying the exercise classes then we have Weight Watchers and Slimming World classes to help get you on track ready for a new, healthier lifestyle.

We also have activities for younger children too. Parents and carers can bring very young children along to our Mums & Toddlers group or join in with Tumble Tots. When they reach pre-school age, the Old Stratford Pre-School is a fantastic opportunity to prepare your child for starting school. Please visit their website for more information on opening times and fees.

The Hall committee would like to provide a little something extra for our senior citizens in the village and have decided to trial a monthly Afternoon Tea (leaflets to be delivered soon)

We are always looking at how we can improve the Community Hall for our residents so if you have any suggestions please do let us know either by phone or email at oldstratfordcommunityhall@hotmail.com

Co-chair
Sheila Shepherd

Co-chair
Claire Clayton

**Did you know your Community Hall offered
all these clubs and activities?**

Pre-school sessions - Every week day (term time)

Mums & Toddlers group - Tuesday

Tumble Tots - Friday

Pilates - Tuesday

Zumba - Tuesday and Thursday

Boxercise - Monday

Badminton - Thursday

Karate - Wednesday

Football - Various

Short Mat Bowls - Tuesday and Thursday

Slimming World & Weight Watchers - Wednesday and Thursday

**For more information on timings, please pick up a leaflet in the
foyer**

or ring Lesley Peach on 01908 307461.

**Don't forget, you can also hire the hall for special occasions too.
(special rates for Old Stratford residents!)**

OLD STRATFORD RAINFALL
(Compiled by Syd Sharpe - resident)

DROUGHT DROUGHT DROUGHT

It started in September 2009 with only one day's rain of 0.25 of an inch on the first day of that month and not one day of rain until the 5th October

The following SUMMER of 2010 was close to drought conditions with:-

April having a total of 0.35 inches of rain
May " " 2.25 inches of rain
June " " 1.80 inches of rain
July " " 0.70 inches

August coming to the rescue with 5.05 inches of rain

The total rainfall for the whole of 2010 was 23.25 inches,

The year 2011 we had:

January	-	2.05 inches
February	-	4.25 inches
March	-	0.2 of an inch
April	-	0.2 of an inch
May	-	1.4 inches
June	-	1.8 inches
July	-	1.6 inches
August	-	1.55 inches
September	-	1.6 inches
October	-	1.5 inches
November	-	1.25 inches
December	-	3.00 inches

19.95 inches

The total so far for 2012 is 2.85 inches. The last rainfall for 2012 was on the 4th March

OLD STRATFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman:

Richard Whittaker **Rectory Cottage, Passenham** **567895**

Vice Chairman:

Tony Pateman **32 Mounthill Avenue** **567907**

Council:

Ian Baxter **6 Wharf Close** **260694**

Bruce Clayton **54 Chapmans Drive** **562778**

Donald MacDonald **61 Deanshanger Road** **562035**

David Meadowcroft **75 Deanshanger Road** **07793516875**

Karen Morris **89 Deanshanger Road** **07532161875**

George Rogers **6 Manorfields Road** **262919**

Pauline Stevenson **73 Oxfield Park Drive** **263905**

Vacancy

Vacancy

Clerk:

Derek Everett **10 Deanshanger Road** **569053**
(de@mk196aw.fsnet.co.uk)

District Councillor:

Mary Clarke **12 Station Road, Blisworth** **07747 757524**
(mclarke@cognisco.com)

County Councillor:

Allen Walker **17 Porters Close, Deanshanger** **260302**

Old Stratford Council website : www.oldstratford.org.uk

**OLD STRATFORD ANNUAL OPEN MEETING
to be held in the Memorial Hall
TUESDAY 17th APRIL 2012 AT 7.30PM**

**This is your chance to quiz Councillors on
matters affecting Old Stratford**

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies**
- 2 Minutes of the 2011 AOM (displayed nb)**
- 3 Any Outstanding Matters (includes Development Issues & Allotments update)**
- 4 Petitions or Questions from Electors
(required in writing to the clerk by 12 noon 17th April)**
- 5 Adoption of Accounts**
- 6 Report from Northamptonshire Police**
- 7. Report from NCC Highways**
- 8 Report from District Councillor**
- 9 Report from County Councillor**
- 10 Any Other Business**