

Trotton with Chithurst Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting

Chairman's report 10th May 2006

I would like to begin this report by thanking my fellow councillors for their time and efforts throughout the year. As volunteers, you all give up your time to attend the meetings and also to undertake tasks in the parish, mostly unsung. Special thanks this year to Anneke Ferrier who left the council in January for her efforts with the Midhurst cycling group, David Dawtrey and the gang for yet another successful community bonfire, and thanks to Julie Paddock for volunteering to join the council. Also to our District Councillor, Andrew Shaxson for his work at Chichester and best wishes to our county councillor, Nola Hendon, who has been unable to be with us lately due to illness. We wish her well for a speedy recovery.

Thanks also to our clerk, Margaret Bentall who has worked tirelessly throughout the year to keep everything running smoothly.

Mention must also be made of the help given in kind by Richard Lyon of The Southdowns Hotel, who kindly lets us hold the council meetings here, free of charge. Finally on the thank you front, to the small number of regular attendees from the parish.

We have thankfully been free of major issues in the last year, although the possible development of the Southdowns National Park still rumbles on. Avian Flu has thankfully been less of a problem than might have been anticipated earlier in the year, although I know that the County Council in particular has plans in place to deal with any specific outbreaks.

I know that it has been a difficult year for the farming community, with major changes to the funding regime, but I hope that these problems will be resolved quickly, as we all recognise that our farmers are the custodians of the terrific countryside which we all enjoy.

All residents will no doubt be aware of the rising costs of energy together with the potentially disastrous impact of climate change. Whilst we are a small community and it may seem rather pointless for us to worry about such things in a global context, nevertheless, I believe that it is through local actions that cumulative change can be effected. I am therefore hoping to start an initiative to get as many people as possible in the parish to participate in an alternative energy scheme. You may have seen that Chichester District Council is now offering loans for renewable energy schemes, and there are also grants available to communities for such schemes. I would like Trotton to be at the forefront of reducing our environmental impact, and the Home Energy Officer of the council is willing to work with us to help achieve this. I hope to be able to offer some form of discounted scheme if several householders indicate a willingness to take part, and to this end, I would like to initiate a survey to find out those keen to help.

Change is never very far away, and there is the likelihood of a major review of local government in the near future. I cannot speculate how such a review will affect the

local authorities in this area, but we as a parish council , will keep an eye on any proposals, and make the local views known.

Finally, we have at last got a web site up and running for Trotton. I hope that over the next year, more people will contribute items to make it a truly village wide resource. For those of you who don't yet know the address, it is www.trotton.org.uk. I am very happy to add items from anyone in the parish, and all parish council business will be posted on the site as soon as is practicable.

Here's to another successful year for everyone in Trotton and Chithurst.

Chris Hodgson
Chairman, Trotton with Chithurst Parish Council
May 2006