



# GRANGE PARK PARISH COUNCIL

Grange Park Community Centre, School Lane,  
Grange Park, Northampton NN4 5FZ

[www.grangeparkpc.org](http://www.grangeparkpc.org)



## ANNUAL REPORT

### FOR 2013/14





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## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2013/14



Grange Park Parish Council's vision is "to ensure Grange Park continues to be a vibrant rural village with a strong community spirit, where everybody matters. The aim is for Grange Park to be a prosperous, safe and attractive place in which to live and work for the present generation, and for generations to come".

The purpose of the Parish Council is to work within its statutory powers to maintain and enhance the village's public amenities, and to help the people of Grange Park to improve their quality of life, in accordance with the Council's vision, and to work in partnership with South Northants District Council and Northampton County Council.

The last year has been a particular busy time for the Parish Council and throughout this the burden on members of Council has been considerable. In addition to undertaking the normal routine business of Council, considerable time and effort has been expended on a number of issues which have emerged.

As such, I would like to record my thanks to all members of Council for their considerable efforts and contribution throughout this time and also to our Parish Clerk and Office staff who have assisted and consistently supported the Council in the work it has undertaken.

During the course of the last year, the Council has welcomed a new Vice Chairman Cllr Sean Dawson and newly co-opted Councillors : Cllr K Clarke, Cllr W Shakespeare and Cllr D Harris. We have also welcomed a new member to our caretaking team – Steve Horner, who is already rising to the numerous challenges of the role.



It is difficult to list everything that has happened recently but a number of achievements do stand out worthy to mention:

### **Conversion of Shower Areas into more Recreational/Social Space.**

The Parish Council applied for planning permission to convert the current shower area space at the Community Centre into more useable space. A consultation/survey was undertaken with the community and those comments were helpful and have been noted. The work commenced at the beginning of the year and has progressed well with a completion date of April 2014. The area will be designed to provide a café/bar/social area for the community and to rent out by hirer's of our facilities.

Over the last few months, members of the council and staff have also given up their spare time in the evenings to run a bar at the community centre in order to establish what is required to run the above facilities once the above project has been completed. Numerous working group meetings have also been attended to discuss in detail the layout/design/fixtures and fittings.

An invite to the 'Launch Party' is as follows and it is hoped that you all will be able to come along and enjoy a live band , BBQ and Band.



As from Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May the Community Centre Café Bar will be open on the following times.

| Community Centre Café Bar<br>Opening Times<br>(from Tuesday 6 May 2014) |                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| MONDAY                                                                  | CLOSED                              |
| TUESDAY                                                                 | 2.45pm - 6.00pm                     |
| WEDNESDAY                                                               | 9.00am - 1.30pm<br>2.30pm - 6.00pm  |
| THURSDAY                                                                | 9.00am - 12.00pm<br>2.30pm - 6.00pm |
| FRIDAY                                                                  | 9.00am - 12.00pm<br>1.30pm - 3.00pm |

### **Social Events**

The Parish Council has had a very successful few months providing social events to the community which have been well attended and successful. More have been planned for this year and will be posted on our website: [www.grangeparkpc.org](http://www.grangeparkpc.org).

### **Youth in the Community**

The Parish Council continues to support Youth Inspired who operate through the Parish providing a youth club on a Thursday and detached workers on a Friday night. The Parish Council has recently reviewed a request to provide a cookery class 'Slice of Pie Cookery' which will enhance the facilities and activities available to them.

### **Management of Green Open Spaces**

The Parish Council are consistently trying to improve the condition of the football pitches at Foxfield Country Park and are very concerned over the last few months that games have had to be cancelled mainly due to the weather but partly because of the drainage system. The Parish Council have therefore agreed that we would initially install a secondary drainage system on pitch 5 (the main and most southerly pitch). These works are planned over the next couple of weeks and hopefully will resolve the problems for the forthcoming season.

The strong winds and heavy rainfall have caused some trees to be blown down – these have come within our policy of dealing with dead, dying and dangerous. Trees have also been thinned within the structural landscaping belt around the boundary of our parish.

**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



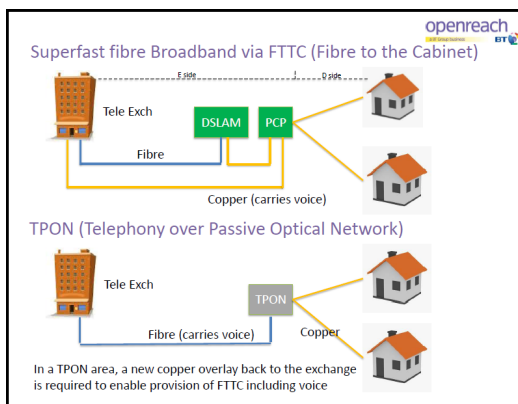
### **Allotments**

Our allotment site - the first for the Parish and a huge investment from the Council has now been open for approximately 3 years. The tenants have put in an extraordinary amount of work and reaped the benefits with bumper crops..

The Allotment Association is doing a great job with the day to day management of the site, and also with fund raising for further improvements to the site including an additional secure container. We are delighted to have as group of such enthusiastic and capable people as tenants. After a disappointingly wet winter and spring, we hope the tenants have a productive year ahead.

## **Broadband**

We have had several meetings with BT and open reach to discuss the installation of superfast broadband within our Parish. The first issue raised was that within our parish we have 11 cabinets which are TPON (Telephony over Passive Optical Networks) and therefore are not compatible with superfast broadband technology. BT have now resolved this technical issue as follows:



The second issue is that in relation to the cost to upgrade these cabinets. Talks are still ongoing with BT/Openreach /Northampton County Council and Grange Park Parish Council to ascertain the exact financial cost and who is going to contribute in order for us to progress the project. All updates will be advertised on our website.

[www.grangeparkpc.org](http://www.grangeparkpc.org)

## **Dog Fouling**

The Parish Council has already taken measures to bring this problem to the attention of its community by putting up posters on the dog bins and organising a dog awareness day. At our last meeting it was also agreed to install an additional "dog bin" in a particularly popular area for dog walkers.

## **Finance**

We are responsible for budgeting, and for the overall control of the administration and financial arrangements of the Council. This includes setting the precept (the amount collected from residents by South Northants Council as part of the Council Tax), the annual audit and return, risk management and insurance.



The Council's Income raised from the precept in 2013/14 was £126,519 and additional income was raised by the hiring of our facilities, interest from our long term investments . Income and expenditure for 2013/14 was as follows:

**Income received from April 2013 until March 2014**

|                               |             |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Reserves from previous year : | £36,370.15  |
| Income from this year:        | £294,501.93 |
| Expenditure :                 | £298,276.29 |

**TOTAL LEFT IN THE BANK AT THE END OF THE YEAR £ 32,595.79**

As ever, we strive to deliver our services under a best value principle and this year we have once again trimmed our running costs.

**Meetings**

Parish Council meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month at the Community Centre commencing at 7.30pm. The first part of the meeting, public questions and reports are received.

All Council meetings are open to the public and press although legislation permits their exclusion during consideration of commercially sensitive information or personnel issues.

If you have any issues, please feel free to contact the Parish Clerk on [parishclerk@grangeparkpc.org](mailto:parishclerk@grangeparkpc.org) who will make sure that it is passed to the members of the Parish Council for consideration.

**Martin Smith**  
**Chairman of Grange Park Parish Council**