

COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORT

There are several important issues facing Marcham and district over the coming weeks and months.

Firstly, Marcham school has been extended to allow the extra children coming forward to attend their local school. This is good news and a great village effort. There are still concerns in the next few years as these children progress through the school whether another classroom is needed.

To this end, I am attending a meeting with officers at OCC to try to plan the next 5 years ahead in terms of school buildings and facilities, to try to ensure that the school can cope with the growing number of young families in the village and surrounding catchment area. It will be an interesting meeting on 6th October, and I am not ruling out the possibility of having to bang the table a bit !

Secondly, the plans for sand extraction at Upwood Park by Hills Aggregates is causing concern amongst the neighbours of this land for reasons of access, traffic, noise, dust and loss of amenity. I will do all I can to ensure that these concerns are listened to and acted upon, where possible. It is always difficult to balance the need for mineral extraction against the need to protect the environment from development. The determination of this application will come before the Planning and Regulation Committee at OCC, the date is not decided as I write, but the details are available on the council website - www.oxfordshire.gov.uk Anyone wishing to speak either for or against the application at that meeting may do so by contacting the monitoring officer - Mr Graham Warrington - at OCC or by e-mail - graham.warrington@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Thirdly, and in some ways it would seem to be a topic that does not rouse passions in Marcham as it does in the Hanneys or Steventon, the proposed reservoir is back on the agenda. All water companies have been busy producing their 25 year plans in draft form - called draft water resources management plans (dWRMP). These dWRMP's are to be scrutinised by the Environment Agency and altered - if needed - before being finally submitted to Defra on November 5th. The Environment Agency have

already commented on Thames Water's dWRMP, and do not support the need for a reservoir at Steventon at this stage. Thames Water are now working overtime trying to convince various bodies of the merit of a reservoir in our area. Whilst some people believe that a reservoir would bring a bypass for Marcham, and it might well do, it is by no means a certainty, as Thames Water have already indicated at some - but not all - of the "consultations" they have held, that OfWat will only let them spend our money on water resources and not new roads! I remain unconvinced by the need for a reservoir at Steventon, but concerned that other measures may have been excluded from the dWRMP for reasons that only Thames Water and the Environment Agency can answer. These alternatives must be fairly explored, or the whole process may be declared void under environmental directives from the EU that our government must comply to. The time from now until 5th November is going to be busy!

Finally, on September 28th, Garford village hall celebrates its 110 year! It was officially opened by Robert Lindsey - Lord Wantage in 1898, and the original key and plaque are in the hands of Garford parish. Despite its age and condition, and the small number of inhabitants in Garford, they are determined to not only retain, but enhance this village hall for future generations. Well done Garford, you have my support and admiration!

CLLR IAIN BROWN

Tel: 01235 751210 Email: iainbrownconservatives@yahoo.co.uk
Janus, Westcot Lane, Sparsholt, Wantage, Oxon OX12 9PZ.

ED VAIZEY WRITES...

I have recently returned from a trip to Beijing. The good news is that the trip did not cost you, the British taxpayer, a penny. The bad news is that it was led by John Prescott. (Actually, that's a cheap shot, I quite like John Prescott and he is a lot more on the ball than his public image suggests.) You may wonder why my visit to Beijing is relevant to Marcham. Well, as everyone knows, China is the world's fastest growing economy, and overtook us a few years ago. Most of the world's electronic goods - photocopiers, mobile phones

and so on - are made there. It also supplies the highest number of illegal immigrants to this country, as well as the largest number of overseas students. So China has a huge impact on us, directly and indirectly. The value of a trip like this is that you get to dispel a few myths.

China is a closed society, and a one-party state. But there is certainly a great deal of freedom apparent in people's daily lives, and a certain level of free discussion about the future direction of the country. Also, China has the largest number of internet users in the world, so censorship is becoming more difficult. China is also taking the environment much more seriously than we might think, and is very conscious that it is in her own self-interest to tackle carbon emissions.

My four days in Beijing also gave me the chance to visit the British paralympic team, and bask in some of their reflected glory, especially as we were briefly top of the table when I was there!

ED VAIZEY, MP Wantage (Con)

MP'S SURGERY WITH ED VAIZEY
5.30-7.00pm, unless stated otherwise

10 Oct	Wantage , Civic Hall
24 Oct	Wallingford , Town Hall
7 Nov	Faringdon , Corn Exchange
21 Nov	Grove Old Mill Hall, Old School Lane
Contact Ed Vaizey by	
Post	The House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
E-mail	vaizeye@parliament.uk
Web	www.vaizey.com
Tel	0207 219 6350

SEPTEMBER CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS 5 Snail 6 Elder 9 Dead faint 10 Big 12 Blackberries 13 Aromatherapy 15 Old 16 Parchment 18 Cross 19 Elwes

DOWN 1 Aside 2 Wind farms 3 Ply 4 Delivery 7 :Market day 8 Inference 11 Treadmill 12 Burglary 14 Stash 17 Ass

BY ALISA

Write to MADNews and let others know what you think about current events