

**DISTRICT COUNCILLOR
REPORT 2005 — 2006**

*given at the Annual Meeting of
Parishioners in May 2006*

Start the year with some excellent news that the District Council has given the go ahead to a New Skate Park for young people in the area funded by the District Council and from a grant to the District from the Waste Recycling Environmental Ltd or WREN. Consultation with schools in the area led to site adjacent to the Leisure Centre at Audlett Drive and the Skate Park is planned to open in the Autumn.

Also pleased to report that the Vale is recycling 27/28% of waste and has won extra funding of £100,000 for meeting this target. The introduction of the Brown Wheelie Bin Scheme has been important in achieving this target. Aware from my case work that there have been problems at Sweet Briar with the collection of waste. I have worked with local residents to resolve this.

I am very aware of the needs of some families in the village for affordable housing and have worked to support their cases at the Vale. I fully support any affordable housing development in the village supported by the parish. In line with this I am pleased to report that the Local Plan is due to be adopted in July this year and supports the requirement of affordable housing in all but the smallest of developments from 25% to 40%. The plan also confirms the District Council's policy of not allowing development outside of the village envelope except where the development is for affordable housing and has the support of the parish.

One major future planning issue is the proposal for a reservoir. The Vale's policy is to oppose the reservoir, but should a reservoir be imposed on the area, the District will be a key player as the planning authority in ensuring all necessary infrastructure and facilities are provided.

The Vale has introduced half price bus passes this year as mandated by government and has managed to do this despite only receiving 50% of the cost from government.

The Vale continues to have the 9th lowest Council Tax in England charging an average of £90 per person or about 1/10th of your overall Council tax bill.

Finally, I have a keen interest in local health services and have been campaigning hard this year for the protection of the local hospital. I was invited to give evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee in February on the spending of funds on private treatment centres that were not needed at time when local hospitals were under threat. I was interviewed as part of Trevor McDonald Tonight as part of this awareness raising.

JANE HANNA

Tel: 01235 772782

Email: janehanna@dial.pipex.com

September 2006

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S
REPORT**

Thames Water are due to make a major announcement on plans for the Upper Thames Major Resource Development (UTMRD) - reservoir to you and me! - on September 13th. This announcement will be made behind closed doors, and will not be made public until the next day, giving Thames Water enough time to catch the papers for the next day, heralding the site for a reservoir. I am certain, as are many others, that the area south of Marcham will emerge from an as yet unpublished list of alternatives. I cannot wait to see what else was "evaluated" apart from our site.

We need water and a more sustainable supply in the future, as we will have to cope with climate change and massive unplanned development in the Thames Valley.

The United Kingdom is not short of water, in fact, we have enough rainfall to supply a much greater population than we have now.

Even with the average consumption set to rise above 200l/ day per person - 160l/ day at present - in the next 20 years, we have more than enough water.

The problem is that we are developing areas that have little available supply locally ie Swindon. Thames Water say that Oxfordshire will have a supply deficit by the year 2020, of course it will if we pump millions of litres per day West to the ever sprawling conurbation that was once a railway town of 20000 people and is now nearly 200000 people in size!

We need to ensure that there is available supply in the River Thames at all times, and the only way to guarantee this is to enact the already planned, passed, vetted and re-evaluated Welsh Scheme of 1869.

Joseph Bateman developed a supply scheme for London in 1869, his scheme involved capturing and storing water in reservoirs in valleys in North Wales, and then transferring water via rivers and aqueducts to London. Bateman had already designed and built schemes for Glasgow, Manchester - twice, as the city outgrew the capacity of the first scheme, and Birmingham.

On his death in 1889, another engineer, Alexander Binnie, redesigned the scheme and used the Elan and Claerwen valleys as his supply in the Cambrian mountains in Mid Wales. This scheme, known as "The Welsh Scheme" "was approved by two Royal Commissions on water supply in 1895 and 1897.

Unfortunately the government of the day did not want the London County Council to be in charge of the water supply for London, and it did not support the Welsh Scheme through parliament in 1899.

The government instead formed the Metropolitan Water Board in 1903, after bringing all of London's water companies into public hands. The Metropolitan Water Board did not have financial resources of the London County Council, and as a result, the Welsh Scheme was dropped

in favour of building reservoirs along the River Thames.

The Welsh Scheme was fully re-evaluated in 1976 by Dr Barry Rydz and his team, and found to be a very worthwhile and sound engineering scheme.

Thames Water and the Environment Agency must PROVE the case for a reservoir in our area against all other reasonable schemes, not hide behind useless EU directives that other countries do not adhere to, or put forward bizarre and unfounded reasons for not using water transfer to the Thames.

We all need water - but in a way that best suits the environment and the long term sustainability of supply, not just the short term financial plans of a private company operating a monopoly position.

IAIN BROWN

Tel: 01235 751210

Email: iainbrownconservatives@yahoo.co.uk

Dear Editor

On Sunday 23rd July I visited the 'Frilford Dig'. It was, as always, very interesting and the guide gave plenty of information.

However, I have one complaint. If you are going to charge £5 per car it is not good policy to only give this information after driving down the rough track to the field. There was no mention of this charge at the notices on both sides of the road by the now defunct Noah's Ark Inn. I hope to see this changed at the next Open Day.

A VISITOR name and address provided

Response from Janey Cumber

Will and I are delighted with how many local people got involved with the July Trendles dig, and visited, especially on National Archaeology Day. The Dig directors have always asked for voluntary donations of £5 per car on National Archaeology Day: perhaps the volunteer helping to park cars was over-enthusiastic in asking for your correspondent's £5 this year. We will certainly suggest that this is more clearly signed in future. However, I would like to take this chance to explain to members of the public that the annual dig needs all the financial support it can get - other than donations its only income is from fees charged to trainee archaeologists. All the trench supervisors have to be paid, and there is never enough money for post-excavation expenses like carbon dating, photography, expert finds analysis and so on. The Vale and Ridgeway Trust has been set up to try to raise extra funding for this nationally important site and we have already been successful in gaining a Lottery Grant to make the dig more accessible to local people. Any contributions would be gladly received by me, Janey Cumber, Manor Farm, Marcham OX13 6NZ. 5