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Neighbourhood Watch Scheme
NHW Co-ordinator Ruth Kentigern Fox

A meeting was held on Monday 20th April to discuss how to move this Scheme forward and although it was disappointing that so few people attended, those who did still felt that it was worthwhile pressing forward in establishing Neighbourhood Watch in our village.

We now have street Co-ordinators for Church Lane, St.Thomas Road, part of Billing Road and part of Green Road, but we have yet to get volunteers to carry out this important role for the remaining areas of the village. The role of Street Co-ordinator involves passing on information you receive from Ruth to **no more than 12 households** within your street, road or cul de sac, and is **not** an arduous, frequent or time consuming task.

If you live in one of the areas currently covered by a street Co-ordinator you will shortly be getting a slip through your door asking if you would like to receive Neighbourhood Watch information, and, if so, whether you would prefer to receive this by e-mail, or by phone if you do not have access to e-mail. It will also tell you who your street Co-ordinator is. Neighbourhood Watch is a two way communication process and not only should information received from the police be passed down the line, but if you see anything suspicious and you do not want to call the police yourself then please ensure that this information is passed back up the line so that we can inform the police ourselves.

We are still trying to organize a date for the police to come out and talk to us about Crime Prevention and in particular the Smart Water scheme, which we are hoping to arrange soon.

If you feel that you would be able to help out as a Street Co-ordinator or would like more information on Neighbourhood Watch then please contact Ruth on 890223 or e-mail ruth@kentigern-fox.com

Useful 'phone numbers :

Dedicated Neighbourhood Watch number : 01604 432436
NEW Northamptonshire Police Switchboard non emergency number : 03000 111 222
Call Crimestoppers anonymously on : 0800 555 111

Snow Ploughs

Following the extreme snow conditions the county experienced last winter, May Gurney WSP, who are responsible for our highways, are taking precautionary measures to ensure that any such weather we experience in the future is dealt with more efficiently. They would be grateful to hear from any farmers who may be able to assist with snow ploughs should we encounter this adverse weather in future. If you can help please contact Richard Woodhouse, East Northants and Corby Area Manager for MGWSP, on 01604 889987.

Brafield Village Spring Clean

The Parish Council would like to thank everybody who helped on Saturday the 25th April in 'the Stop the Drop' campaign. With litter becoming more of a problem throughout the country, the Stop the Drop campaign publicised a nation-wide litter-pick to create awareness of this problem and to try to help make Britain a tidier place. The Parish Council joined this activity, with Dawn Aston and Gill Ager organizing, and our clean-up was a great success. Although the Saturday itself started damp and blustery, over 20 volunteers and 4 junior litter-pickers joined us to clear the footpaths, verges and hedges of our village. The weather improved throughout the morning and together we collected 18 large bin bags of litter as well as a few oddments such as crates and wheels. Thanks are also extended to South Northamptonshire Council for the gloves, bags and trendy safety vests which they provided, as well as to the Police for supplying the 'SLOW' warning signs.

Lay By Grant

The Parish Councils of Little Houghton and Brafield have jointly been awarded £1600 towards the A428 Lay By improvements that were carried out in the Autumn last year. The grant has come from Councillor Brian Binley's 'Empowering Councillors and Communities Fund', and we will now need to provide evidence of how the funds have benefitted the local community!

Next Parish Council Meeting:
Tuesday 7th July at 7.30 p.m. in the Sargeant Memorial Hall Brafield

Parish Paths Warden

Sadly, Helen Frostwick has decided to step down as our volunteer Parish Paths Warden. Helen has undertaken this task on behalf of the Parish in such an amiable way for about nine and a half years, during which time not only has she walked the Parish footpaths regularly, but has also attended every Parish Council meeting to report back on their condition. We thank her warmly for her contribution and wish her well in her 'retirement'!

Wanted : New Parish Paths Warden

Do you like walking our local countryside?

Brafield is well endowed with public rights of way – 30 footpaths (for walking) and 4 bridleways (for walking, horse riding and cycling). They enable walking within the village (and include some suitable for wheelchair access), around the outskirts of its 'built' area, and lead out into the countryside connecting with other routes to form circular walks to Great and Little Houghton, Cogenhoe and Whiston, and Denton.

The County Council is responsible for rights of way but it is greatly helped by volunteers being its local 'eyes and ears'. For almost 20 years voluntary Parish Paths Wardens have acted as our village's local contact with the County Council. For anyone who walks regularly in and around the village it's an easy task involving keeping an eye on and reporting any issues with the condition of the surface of the paths, the safety of any structures (such as stiles, gates etc), and even making simple improvements (such as waymarking), to make our rights of way more accessible and easier to use. It's not a burdensome responsibility in Brafield as the farmers are very good at maintaining the paths that cross their land. The County Council provides support to Wardens in various ways and, with Councillor Kevin Ward being Head of Countryside Access in Central Bedfordshire, there's ample local support and guidance available.

Would you be interested in taking on this role and liaising with the Parish Council and County Council over the rights of way in Brafield? If you are interested, then please contact the Chair Gill Morgan for an informal chat.

Parish Council Newsletter

Chris Pittams has recently moved out of the parish so will no longer be delivering Newsletters on the Horton side of the Bedford Rd. We thank her for all her support and wish her well in her new home. Fortunately for us, Chris has arranged for Elsie Pittams to take her place and work with Donna Burge to deliver on that patch. We thank Elsie for volunteering and welcome her to the team. One person has requested a larger print format for the Newsletter. If you know of any other partially sighted residents who would find this helpful please contact any Parish Councillor.

Bus Shelter cleaner

Albert Rainbow kindly returned on a temporary basis to fill the breach in cleaning the bus shelters around the village whilst we tried to find a replacement for him, but he now feels he cannot carry on this task any longer.

We urgently need a cleaner for the 3 bus shelters around the village.
2 hours per week – pay negotiable.
Contact: Gill Morgan on 01604 891934 to discuss

Our Precept for year ending 31.03.09

The Parish Council 'precept' (the money allocated to the Parish Council from your Council Tax) was £10,000 for last year 2008/9. Our expenditure was £12,297 (net of V.A.T.) Breakdown as a percentage of that expenditure was as follows:-

Streetlights 18%	Clerk 18%
Refurbishment of Village Hall 12%	Lay by 10%
Mowing 8%	Play Area 7%
Bus Shelter Mural 4%	Pond 4%
Insurance 4%	Maintenance 3%
Green 3%	Audit 2%
Admin 2%	Hall rent 1%
Newsletter 1%	Subscriptions 1%
Other 2%	

Parking

Inconsiderate parking is again an issue in the village. Heavy vehicles have to mount pavements and verges causing damage. If you know a heavy vehicle is expected, e.g. on Fridays when the refuse lorry comes, please ensure you do not block access to any area by leaving your vehicle parked irresponsibly. Although verges do not belong to ANY property, many people do try to maintain them and it can be very distressing to see them cut up. Footpaths can also be seriously damaged causing trip hazards to pedestrians.

Parish Council Minutes and Annual Review 2008/9

These will shortly be posted on the website for your information. The village website address is displayed at the top of every Newsletter.

Village Events : for your information

St. Laurence Church Brafield on the Green
Flower Festival (and Fete) 2009
Saturday & Sunday 13th 14th June
1.30 – 4.30 each day
Stalls and Sideshows in the Church Car Park and around the Sargeant Memorial Hall. Refreshments in the Hall
Horticultural Show and Fete : Saturday August 22nd 2009

**Members of the public are most welcome to attend any meeting
At the start of the Parish Council meeting, time is set aside for public enquiries**