MELKSHAM WITHOUT NORTH 2012-2013

Where did the last 4 years go and have we changed for the better? Putting aside the Coalition and Central Government who have much more to do to convince me they have got it right, I do believe Wiltshire Council have got it in most aspect have done a good job. Town and Parish Councils have again been excellent in their support of residents. Noticeably, there has been very little in truth, cross party fighting to the benefit of Wiltshire residents. The past 12 months have seen the Diamond Jubilee; better supported than anyone could imagine and of course the second to none Olympics with my only disappointment being that we couldn't see the torch relay come through any areas of our ward. I hope unlike myself many residents got to see the relay.

The East of Melksham development is well underway now and I hope we are nearing a solution to a bigger, much improved new Junior School as part of this development. As usual lack of finance is the problem but I believe a workable solution is being considered and we should get our school.

We have of course now have everything in place to go ahead and build the new and biggest Campus in Wiltshire, right here in the Melksham Area, truly benefitting all and I believe forever consigning to the grave the much used statement of 4 years ago that Melksham was the poor relation to Trowbridge. The latest developments cause me a little disappointment in that a Dr Surgery is now proposed for the Campus instead of going into the Leekes site as I had hoped.

In our rural districts we have kept mobile libraries whilst a new one will be included in the campus.

Slurry tanks, a Bishops Seat with bollard and a Solar Farm have recently concentrated minds in Broughton Gifford, whilst cyclists, bus shelters and speeding continue to concern those in Atworth although we have achieved the necessary funds to at least start to find a solution with the implementing of a double gateway system. Work is ongoing and whatever the May elections outcome, all will continue to try and achieve the only sensible solution in Atworth, with reduced speed limits and improved road markings where required.

Floods have brought distress across the Ward and County and moves are afoot to see what can be done. After a huge amount of lobbying from myself and your Parish Councillors, surveys have happened, meetings underway and planned, with plans to start alleviation work ready to go. Will it solve all our problems, I expect not, but, the weather is here to stay and I believe a policy change may be required to protect homes in the years to come. A site visit has taken place around Shaw and Whitley with some excellent work to be started which will go a long way to alleviate past and any future flood problems and a meeting was held in Shaw Village Hall to listen to residents and to pass on what I hope will be received as good news in trying times to residents. With a little extra money from Central Government more of the same can

be planned and having almost drowned in Norrington Lane recently much more is still required to be done.

Funds are now available for 100% of our County to receive Broadband coverage with 91% of that coverage to be superfast Broadband, therefore none of our rural areas should be without.

After much lobbying we (WC) have won the appeal to stop BANES Council implementing weight limits on the Cleveland bridge and thereby adding more heavy traffic to our already clogged village roads. A good result for us all and future Councillors must keep their eye on the ball for future attempts to implement such changes.

The Area Board has allocated almost £200k on local projects taking in all age groups with no reason why this shouldn't continue in the future.

I have had cause to meet a great many residents over the past year, mainly with planning issues but others concerning bins, recycling, homelessness, speeding, parking, all range of things. Not all have been happy with the outcomes of their enquiries but I, we, as Councillors have done our best. I have been glad to have been able to take part in Charity events, the latest having my head shaved for Cancer research and the RUH with the next one hopefully to be an abseil in Wells with a group from Melksham in aid of research into stillbirth.

The last year, indeed 4 years have had their ups and downs but in general have I believe been productive and enjoyable and whatever happens on the 2nd May I honestly believe the Melksham Area is a better place with even better to come.