

ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN – CLLR. DAVID FOLKES – TO THE  
BROADWAY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING ON MARCH 23<sup>RD</sup> 2006

Good evening. It's my pleasure to welcome you all again to the Annual Parish Meeting. We have now been in our new office at 5 Russell Square for a full year. You may recollect that this office was provided specifically for the Parish Council from Section 106 agreement monies which were agreed with the developer and the District Council and therefore is not paid for out of public taxation. We have also successfully transacted all our Council meetings and other business in these new offices, with a saving on hire charges for the Lifford Hall and with generally more participation from residents.

In this respect, it is pleasing to see that Chase Homes have now finished their construction of all new dwellings in the Russells and that now more than 85% of the houses have been sold; the development includes the sheltered accommodation and Budgens Supermarket all finished to what appears to be a very high standard of workmanship. It is also good to be able to report that the disused toilet block in the Swan Car Park has finally been demolished and this has greatly improved the entrance aspect to the whole new development. The new TIC and the Gordon Russell Heritage Museum are expected to open later this year.

This has been another active year for your Council with every effort being made to improve services whilst being mindful of the ever increasing costs for their provision. In this respect we are negotiating a new arrangement for street lighting with the County Council. This should enable us to at least stabilise the increasing costs for the maintenance and energy requirements of some 135 footway lights. After a stringent testing process ten of the lighting columns were found to be deficient and in need of immediate replacement and this been one of the main factors in our increased running costs for the last twelve

months. However, a programme of ultra sonic tests is still needed before all the lights can be fully sub contracted to the County Council

Three councillors, Cllrs Joyce Measures, Michael Gordon-Smith and Barry Chard resigned during the year but I am pleased to report that there were sufficient applications to replace two of them, resulting in the co-option of Cllr. Mrs Joy Stock, Cllr. Neil Hilton and Cllr Nigel Robinson. Next year will of course see new Council elections and we hope that there will be continued support for the work of the Council and enough applications to fill all the vacancies.

Your council has been carefully monitoring the problems of crime and vandalism in the village and have worked with the police and our local MP Peter Luff to try and find ways of reducing these problems. This has resulted in an increased police presence in the village and the promise that consideration will be given to the appointment of a Neighbourhood Warden and a Community Support Officer. In addition the Rural Beat Officer is to be replaced by a new Local Policing Officer responsible for Broadway, Badsey and Wickhamford. Whilst these initiatives will no doubt help reduce these serious problems, there is still a need to be given to longer term measures.

In this respect, we are examining how we may be able to offer support to County Councillor Liz Eyre in her sponsoring a multi-purpose centre with a full time youth worker. The Parish Council is in particular looking at offering the land on which the Youth Club is currently located to enable this project to be constructed, subject to satisfactory legal guarantees which protect our investment. It is also gratifying to note that after lengthy planning delays, phase one of our CCTV initiative will now be realised sometime this year, depending on contractual negotiations, which are still being conducted. This would then give the village a fully monitored CCTV surveillance system.

However, it is a disappointing to note that the Skate Board Park which only opened 12 months ago has had to be closed because of technical problems but we are assured that every effort is being made to see that this facility for our youth will soon be operating again with improved facilities.

We have worked closely with the Broadway Trust in certain key areas such as planning and tree surgery to provide the best solutions to keeping Broadway an attractive place to live in and visit. In particular, the Trust has made a useful contribution to the appraisal of Broadway's Conservation Area. The Trust was also represented on the Sub Group on Pavements and Parking which met during the last year to report on the best way of proceeding with these issues, as well as considering whether the double yellow lines on the Upper High Street should remain in place. As a result, the Council has applied for parking restrictions to be eased in the bays, by being increased to 60 minutes; but there was no recommendation to alter the restrictions on double yellow lines, as your Council firmly believes that any easement here could have a profoundly negative effect on one of Britain's most beautiful landmarks in the heart of the conservation area.

The other important project for the village has been the writing of a Broadway Plan, which despite some earlier logistical problems is now back on track thanks to the work of a number of people including Ian Harper, Mary McGuire , Simon Williamson and Jim Schmitz of the Parish Plan Steering Group with additional help from Derek Wakelin of the Broadway Trust. The Plan will hopefully provide the village with a useful platform for considering future strategies. It is hoped that this in turn will be consolidated with a Village Design Statement so that the views of our community are carefully taken into account in the planning process.

Your Council has continued to make financial contributions to assist the work of the Tourist Information Centre, the Vale of Evesham Volunteers, the Evesham Citizen's Advice Bureau, the Wychavon Sport's Council, and latterly to the North Cotswold Voluntary Help Centre and the Evesham and Pershore Neighbourhood Watch.

I end on a very positive note. The most recent Visitor Survey conducted by the Heart of England Tourist Board showed that our village scored the highest number of points for the provision of services and facilities which demonstrates how effectively the County Council, District Council and Parish work together for the benefit of Broadway.

It only remains for me to thank all my fellow Councillors as well as the Clerk and Assistant Clerk for all their hard work on the past 12 months and we look forward to serving Broadway for a further year until the elections next year.

Thank you