**Parish Council Report**

**November  2014**

At our last meeting of the year we looked at ways of ensuring that the Recreation Field complies with safety recommendations.  The biggest expense will be providing a more permanent soft surface under play equipment.  At the moment there is a layer of bark, but this degrades very quickly.  We are seeking grant help with the cost – which could be £3,000 – and are also researching the most economic solution.

While we are doing all we can to ensure children can play safely on the field, it is very disappointing to have reports of villagers taking dogs onto the play area.   There are clear notices prohibiting this - and for very good reasons: not only is it unpleasant for children to play where dogs have fouled, the mess is also a potential health hazard.  It would be great if all villagers helped to dissuade dog owners from taking their pets onto the field.

Visitors to the field will have noticed that two new benches are now in place. The cost was shared by the Council and a donation from the Country Show, to whom thanks are due.

The recent Bonfire celebrations on the field and in the Club were very successful – a great community effort, with excellent pre-publicity, delicious food, an enormous bonfire, splendid fireworks and then enjoyable entertainment in the Club afterwards.  Congratulations to all involved.

With such mild weather over the last few weeks, it is easy to forget that winter might well bring us frost and snow.  The Parish Council bought new grit bins for the village at the end of last winter, so we are well prepared for the worst.  Do feel free to use the grit in them – both for road and path surfaces. You can report the need for more grit to our Clerk: parishclerk@birdingbury.org .

This is the time of the year when the Council decides on its next year’s budget.  We decided to maintain the current level of the Precept (the money raised from Council Tax in the parish area) at £6,200.  Despite some significant expenditure on various projects over the last year, the Council’s financial position is healthy enough for us not to have to seek an increase.

**All councillors join me in wishing you a very merry Christmas and a healthy, happy New Year.**

**The next meeting of the Parish Council will be at 7.30pm on**

**Tuesday 20th January 2015 in the Birbury.**

**All are welcome to attend.**

Diana Turner,

Chair, Birdingbury Parish Council