

Summary of the Annual Parish Meeting 2008 of Debenham Parish Council (PC) held on 12th May

Seven of the eight remaining councillors (one sick) and 23 members of the public attended the meeting. Invitations had been sent to 22 organisations in the village in order to inform the community of their activities, publicise forthcoming events and identify new members. Reports were received from 19 of those plus 3 others.

Parish Council Community Awards. The following three people received awards for the outstanding work they have done in support of the people of Debenham.

Bev Bridges and Lyn Odell were nominated for the role they have played in successfully providing Roundabout Preschool with a new building. They have both been involved with the school for 4 years and during this period they discovered that the portakabin which the preschool was using was unsuitable for use into the future and took the decision to raise in excess of £100,000 so that Roundabout would have a new building with more places available for local children. Over the course of 18 months they lead the two committees in fund-raising and project managing the new build, learning many new skills on the way, from writing effective grant applications to building site management. They overcame many challenges in planning regulations, environmental side effects, declined grants and strict conditions of access from Sir Robert Hitcham School, without having had experience of any of this previously. They put in many 40 hour weeks whilst looking after their children who themselves would be too old to use the new building upon completion. They therefore had the vision to put in place this project, the courage to pursue it and the determination to see it through, leaving Debenham with the legacy of a fantastic new preschool building which will last well in excess of 20 years.

Maureen Cracknell was nominated for contributing so much to our community through her voluntary work, especially with 1st Debenham Girl Guides. Maureen worked as the Head Cook at our primary school for many years. Her cooking skills were utilised during the 19 years voluntary service (1988-2007) she gave to Debenham Guides as a unit helper. She was able to pass on these skills and encourage Guides to achieve Cooks, Confectionery and Backwood cooking badges. (She is particularly well known for her scones and these are always in great demand at local coffee mornings). Her voluntary work included Youth reviews, where she appeared on stage with all uniformed organisations to raise funds for local youth groups. Maureen has been involved with many street fairs, running stalls which raised funds for the Debenham Guides. Also, she has regularly assisted with serving teas to people receiving inoculations at the Debenham Community Centre.

Annual Accounts. These were summarised as showing that the last year had gone largely to plan with healthy reserves being built for long term necessary projects. They will now be sent for internal and external audits.

Reports. The reports from the Chairman of the Parish Council and all the community groups will be made available in the Resource Centre and on the website within the next week or so.