Annual Parish Meeting – PC Chair’s Report - Pippa Dennitts

We’ve had no Annual Parish Meeting since 2019 due to the pandemic, so it is lovely that this is one of those things which is returning to some kind of normal. This last year has also been one of change for the Parish Council after nearly two years of online meetings, returning to meeting in person two changes of Clerk and a change of Councillor.

I’d like to thank Karen Paradise for supporting us in the role of Clerk for several years and then Denise Humphris who helped us with a period of change before going back to a role in education. I’d also like to welcome Grahame Walkingshaw our current Locum Clerk.

I’d also like to thank Jonathan Hills who stepped back after many years on the Parish Council and to welcome our newest Councillor Alison Clarke. This is Alison’s first time as a Parish Councillor and she is already getting involved in several key projects.

There are many others who support the work the Parish Council does for parishioners on a volunteer basis who I would like to say a very big thank you to, including;

* David Golifer who keeps on top of all things related to our footpaths and public rights of way
* Alan Gosling who has provided diesel for the Parish Council Tractor
* Mick Dorling who has recently stepped back from his role as our tree warden

The new housing developments which are in progress and those recently completed signify a change for the village and the opportunity to welcome new faces and I’m really pleased to welcome Sue and Faris Shimali who have recently moved to one of the new developments and have taken over the role of tree wardens. It is wonderful to see newcomers volunteering their support.

We also enjoy consistent and positive support from both our District Councillor, Lynda McWilliams and our County Councillor Alan Goggin, so again thanks to them.

It has been a difficult couple of years for everyone as we went through the Covid pandemic, but at the same time it was wonderful to see our village spirit come to the fore as people set out to support one another in so many ways. Even now as we watch with deep concern the war in Ukraine, again we see members of our parish doing what they can to support those in need. That village spirit is something to be proud of and to applaud.

As a Parish Council we often find ourselves addressing ongoing challenges for the parish and we have taken a new approach to that this year by forming small working groups to get to grips with particular issues. This has proved particularly productive with the South Side Track working group, which is made up of Councillors and members of the public working collectively to find a long-term solution to the issues there. We are looking forward to seeing their progress in the coming year and will build on this approach as we address other challenges.

Another ongoing area of concern is vehicles speeding in the village and I’m really pleased that we have purchased some mobile Speed Indicator Devices (SID’s) which will soon be seen around the parish, and the completion of several of the village gateway features which are also aimed at reducing vehicle speed as they approach all sides of the village. The remainders of these should be completed in the coming year.

Of course, a very large feature of our village life is entered around the village green and it has been fantastic to see so much activity returning here with the football club and the cricket club on a regular basis. Also we are very much looking forward to the return of the Village Show this year, along with the Jubilee Celebrations. Thank you to everyone who involves themselves in the committees and organisation for these and all off the other events, groups and clubs which make our village life so active & enjoyable.

Finally, I would like to thank my vice chairman Luke Edwards and all of my fellow councillors who each contribute a considerable amount of time and efforts to support the parish.