

THE CHAIRMAN'S 2020-2021 REPORT

PATTISHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Once again, we have experienced a year of challenges due to the continuing effects of coronavirus. Sadly, we have lost members of our parish to this deadly virus and our thoughts go to all those who have been affected by the loss of friends and family. Hopefully there seems to be a brighter light on the horizon with the vaccination programme being so successful and we can now look forward to experiencing better times ahead.

The community spirit shown in the first lockdown appears to have continued throughout the year with residents making good use of our beautiful countryside in and around our parish. We are indeed fortunate for the open spaces that so many urban dwellers have been denied in these unprecedented times. Once again, I would like to thank Linda Hemmings our Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, Bob Illingworth for managing the parish website and his wife Iris for all the work and enthusiasm she brings to the many activities that happen throughout the year. The gift of cake and a plant delivered to households was a lovely gesture as the annual Seniors Christmas lunch was unable to take place. Many thanks also go to Suzanne Rapier who is stepping down after many years as the booking clerk for the parish hall and a big thank you to the many residents who help in so many different ways.

The precept for this year included money for maintenance of the churchyard wall. It may come as a surprise too many to learn that it is the parish council who shoulders the responsibility of churchyard repairs not the Peterborough diocese. The council has already repaired a section of the wall and it intends to implement a rolling programme of maintenance rather than encounter a further collapse which could prove extremely costly. Although we have tried very hard to obtain a grant for play equipment at the Booth Close play area, we cannot be entirely certain such funds will be forthcoming thus we have decided to earmark funds of our own to improve the green space as a more enjoyable play area.

We are pleased that the Number 87 bus service has managed to continue although very limited use was made by passengers during the past year due to lockdowns and concerns of travelling on public transport. Nevertheless, the council believe that such a service is a necessity for villages in rural areas and whilst it remains economically viable, we will continue to financially support this venture. A major success was the creation of an Allotment Association which has seen the interest in having an allotment increase to the point there is a waiting list. Throughout the year in fine or foul weather there are folk tending their patches and it is a joy to see such well-tended allotments.

The council have been able to support various ventures such as the cricket club and the Produce Show whilst making a considerable donation to our local school to help with their internet provision. Organisations should contact the Council with any requests for assistance which may be considered at our monthly meetings held on the second Thursday of each month except for August when no meeting is scheduled. Throughout the past year the council has met virtually which has worked remarkably well. As always, the main topics have involved the four P's: Potholes, parking, planning and poo!

Throughout the winter potholes seemed to pop up on a daily occurrence mainly because of the cold, wet, and frosty conditions that seemed to prevail for week upon end. It appeared that only craters of any considerable size got dealt with, but eventually more modest ones appeared to be filled in. Parking, especially with more people working from home continued to be a problem and a source of irritation to those using footpaths especially with buggies. Planning always gets residents attention and we have seen quite a few new or proposed new developments appear of late. It should be remembered that although the parish council may have considered plans and made recommendations it is the West Northants (incorporating South Northants) Council that makes the ultimate decision. Finally poo and far too much of it! Please take your dog's presents home or use the dog waste bins distributed throughout the parish. The main problem is not on our pavements and verges but the footpaths through fields where the amount of dog excrement is quite remarkable.

The winter also heralded the appearance of road closures, uprooting of verges and a general abundance of mud as Gigaclear installed broadband throughout the various villages in our parish. Thankfully nearly all traces of their labours have disappeared, and we are now a better-connected parish. Likewise, the oil and water appearing along the Gayton Road has also been sorted so hopefully no more problematic patches along this stretch of road.

Although Roger Clarke intended to step down at the last AGM, we requested that he remained for one more year to see us through to the 2021 elections. He has now officially stepped down and we welcome Fiona Mytton from Eastcote in his place. There was not a parish election as only nine candidates stood for the nine places. Roger's knowledge and understanding have been invaluable, and we once again thank him for all he has done for the parish over the years. Also, to Ann Addison our clerk whose help and guidance is always so greatly appreciated by councillors and parishioners alike. Pattishall Council wish you all the very best for the forthcoming year and hope that we will once again get to enjoy the many events within our parish that take place throughout the year.

Barry H Evans May 2022