

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – May 2024

Chairman's Report

Welcome to the Annual Parish Meeting for 2024. This is the first for some of our Parish Councillors who have been co-opted in the past year. At our Annual Parish Council Meeting we have reconfirmed our eligibility to retain the General Power of Competence.

The past 12 months has been another very busy year for the Parish Council yet again with many issues being resolved and new projects progressing.

Recreational Facilities

The Recreation Ground continues to be maintained by our Maintenance Officer and Mowing Contractor. The 350+ trees we have planted are continuing to grow and add colour to the grounds. The trees in the fruit Orchard are getting established and it is hoped will provide fruit to harvest this year. We have a variety of fruit trees including plum, apple, cherry, pear, apricot and walnut.

The Recreational Ground is a huge asset for the parish and is used by many residents who really enjoy the environment that we have created.

Following the successful grant award from the National Lottery the Clerk is working with a play equipment provider to install a climbing wall. At £7,000 this will be a great addition for children and adults using the grounds. This new feature compliments the wide range of equipment that we have provided and will be another demonstration of the active policy adopted by the parish council.

Junior Goal Posts

The junior goal posts were removed due to being broken along with 30 tonnes of buried concrete to make way for the Sensory Garden. In April new goal posts were installed, these are specially designed for junior players and include a run back. This facility was especially requested by our junior members of our electorate.

Hobby Centre

Our electorate cover a wide age group and the council tries to cater for everyone, we decided to work on the feasibility of a Man shed or a hobby centre that would be an area dedicated for social and skills to be developed. This will enable everyone to spend time in a social and beneficial environment. Work began in the Autumn of 2023 on obtaining permission to create a Hobby Centre next to the Pavilion. We are working through the lengthy planning process. I have worked with a planning specialist to ensure that we submit the required information. Pre planning permission has been obtained and we have now applied for full planning permission. The Clerk is working in the background on obtaining grants.

Restoration of Assets

The Parish Council looks after circa £2m in Parish Council assets including play equipment, community buildings, benches, bus shelters the list goes on. The RFO controls a tight budget to meet the costs, relying on free labour, without which the Precept would be much higher. We have managed through prudent management to keep our precept at a realistic level with a minor increase.

Village Hall

We have stabilised the running of the village hall and have a modern effective booking system. Despite the increases in electricity and running costs the facility has proved more popular enabling the managing committee to keep our hire rates the same as last year.

The facility continues to be well maintained and complies with all Health and Safety and insurance requirements.

Our thanks go to Karen Meggitt, John and Lisa for their dedication and work to promote and keep this facility in pristine condition.

Pavilion Update

Work continued on improvements to the Pavilion. A partition wall was removed enabling the building to have a more useful hire space. A new kitchen was installed in April. The Parish Council submitted an application to HS2 which disappointingly was refused. Thanks to the hard work of Councillor McCarthy, we obtained a free kitchen from Wickes which included the base units, work tops, sink. A grant from WCC paid for the wall cupboards and the oven. The community really came together and white goods including the dishwasher and fridge-freezer were donated.

A local contractor with the assistance of myself and my son the kitchen was ripped out and installed over a weekend to avoid any disruption to hirers.

Work was completed just in time for the launch of Cubbington's Youth Club.

Memorial Bench

Sadly, last year we lost an active and valued member of the Community, Dave Morris. Dave was always heavily involved in planning and delivering events.

A memorial bench is being installed outside the Pavilion and we have the David Morris Cup which is held by winners of competitions on the Fun Day.

We also have had to reinstate the retaining wall by the side of the Pavilion which had deteriorated, being wood, this is being replaced by a concrete wall, giving a permanent construction and solution.

Community Events

Organised by Councillor Meggitt and funded by the Parish Council we have all experienced some excellent community events including the Fun Day, Christmas Light Switch on. The Village is filled with the Christmas Trees and illuminated by attractive lights. A sincere thanks to all involved which included many local residents giving a real community spirit.

Cubbington Youth Club

A longstanding wish for me personally was to open a Youth Club. I am delighted to say that on April 12th, we launched Cubbington Youth Club for Cubbington children aged 11 to 14. We tentatively opened the doors on the first night, not knowing if anyone would turn up but I am delighted to say that it is a massive success.

We have so many of our younger members attending that we will soon spend the grant we obtained to pay for Youth Workers. We budgeted for 2 paid staff per session but due to the safeguarding ratio we require 5 Youth Workers per session. Councillor McCarthy and the Clerk are

busy looking for further grant funding. At their last meeting we had 53 attend showing how much the need is for this and a special thanks to Cllr MCarthy for making this happen.

NHP

Councillors Watkins and Willoughby have continued the work on the neighbourhood plan which has moved into another phase. A sincere thanks to all involved in this worthwhile project which will help in the future planning our Parish.

Cublington flood prevention,

Cllr Willoughby was instrumental in co ordinating the flood prevention scheme where he engaged all the relevant agencies and held them to account to ensure that those responsible and those affected had the information that was need to reduce any future flooding.

Cublington Link

We believed it to be important that we advise our parishioners what we do and what we have achieved. To this end a leaflet has been produced that will be distributed to all households in our parish. We hope this will be a useful tool to keep everybody informed as to what we do and also encourage others to participate. Many thanks to all who contributed to this first issue.

Projects for 2024-25

The Parish Council have many projects which we would like to complete this financial year including:

Crossing on the Rugby Road near the new housing development

Installation of a new VAS sign on the Rugby Road

Improved lighting in the Pavilion Car park

Completion of the Hobby Centre

Updating the Village Hall and Pavilion

20 mph areas around our schools

Continued support for the youth club

Improvements to our bus services and to hold the WDC and the WCC to account for their statutory obligations.

Thanks to all Parish Councillors for the work, they have done for the parishioners and we look forward to the next year when we can move forward.

Ian Hodges
Chairman