

May I extend a very warm welcome to all of you here. For more reasons than ever, it's good to see you in person after such an extraordinary year.

Talking of extraordinary years, your Parish Council has not been exempt from its own changes and challenges. At the end of 2019 we said goodbye to Kurt Kovach as Chair and to whom we offer our grateful thanks for all the hard work he had put in during his time as Councillor and more recently Chair of the Parish Council. Gary Hope then stepped into his shoes and I as Vice Chair, and then of course we had lockdown in March of 2020. At that time Gary Hope moved away from the area at first temporarily and then later in July announced his non return to the area and therefore ineligibility to be a Councillor. Our thanks also go out to him for his contribution.

I was asked to step in as acting Chair and then in July of 2020 accepted the role of Chair, which I am honoured to continue with on your behalf to this day.

Other changes of persons during the last 12 months have included the very welcome arrivals of Councillors Claire Holloway, Rory Hogan and Leita Sly (although unfortunately Rory has had to step down in the last couple of days due to new work commitments. However he shall be staying around to assist with ongoing projects). We have said good bye to our local PCSO Sarah Fretter recently to whom we have sent our gratitude for her vast positive impact on our local policing and welcome PC Mike Redman and PCSO Simeon Hodson as our new policing team. Additional officers are due to be seconded to our area in the near future. Carol Cotterill (a Parish resident) continues to be the Rural Crime Officer and a constant support to our local community

Craig Tracey, also a Parish resident remains our Member of Parliament for North Warwickshire & Bedworth and is always on hand to offer any guidance, resources and support to the Parish Council.

Our ongoing thanks must be extended to our Borough Councillors Dave and Marian Humphreys, the latter of which we are delighted to welcome as in fact the new County Councillor covering our area. Their continued and endless support not only financially but with encouragement and engagement in what is happening within our Parish is appreciated greatly. The outgoing County Councillor Dave Parsons has been sent our thanks also.

This is also the right opportunity to thank all our volunteer Parish Councillors for their extensive work throughout this last year. Brian Frost who is also the Chair of the Hall Committee and now Vice Chair of the Parish Council; and Mike Smith (who was Vice Chair up until May 2021) have both continued to offer their relentless enthusiasm and knowledge to the running of the Parish. In addition our warm thanks go out to Anita Allsopp, our Clerk, without whose support and professionalism, our work could simply

not be done. I would like to extend my personal thanks to Anita for holding my hand throughout my first term in office, so to speak.

Procedural & Profile Changes

During the last year the PC has moved from paper cheques to online banking and as a result of the pandemic moved to online zoom meetings in order to carry out its business. In addition the website continues to be updated regularly with the agenda and minutes of the meetings, important information which comes through from the Police, the Borough and County Councils, the endless support networks from the area advising on Covid19, Mental Health issues, reporting crime, support for those in financial difficulties and many other subjects. These are also posted on the PC Facebook site which we launched last year and encourage all parishioners to 'like'. We do still use the Shuttington Informed site to direct people through to the PC site. The PC social media is not at the present time a discussion forum, therefore we would enthusiastically like to encourage all parishioners to send their thoughts, ideas, comments on all matters which affect the Parish through to the Clerk or any of the Councillors preferably by email or if not by telephone.

The Village Voice magazine continues to provide important information on village activities especially with regard to the Church activities. Claire Holloway continues to have the Parishes gratitude for the hard work that goes into it.

Lockdown Support

In March of 2020 our country went into lockdown and stayed in such a position until most recently. During that time the Parishioners of Shuttington & Alvecote really showed their true spirit of stoicism and community engagement. The Support Group was set up involving many residents and included, but not limited to identifying those most vulnerable to assist with shopping and prescription or medical visits, emotional wellbeing support, dinners, cakes, newspapers, Easter eggs, Christmas presents, village walks, security packs, and a most heavenly VE day of celebrations. To list all those involved would be risky so as to miss anyone out. Suffice to say, our community demonstrated just how much of a community we really do have here and long may it continue.

The Hall committee does intend to re-start coffee mornings and commence a lunch club in the upcoming weeks.

The financial support for these activities were made possible by generous donations from parishioners, WCC, WBC, OPCC the Village Hall and raised just over £3000.

Finances

The revenue for the Hall continues to come from renting out although the past year has stifled that income somewhat. Thankfully as restrictions have now been eased, the Hall has managed to resume its business and is used by the NRG dance troupe, Yoga classes, Whippet club and Archery Club. The hall is also available for private hire. The Parish Council income is mainly generated from the precept which currently stands at £7000 pa. This equates to approximately 54 pence per household per week. The next review of this will be January 2022. The PC also has income from the Whippet and Archery Clubs and some funds were returned to both clubs due to lockdown last year. Without having had the income from Footballers or Caravan site hire for a considerable period of time, the account balance is not looking as healthy as it was and therefore further revenue opportunities are to be discussed in the forthcoming months. This could include Fetes, charity fundraising events and vintage car rallies for example. If anyone has further suggestions or knows of organisations looking for such facilities please do not hesitate to contact us.

Playing Field & Hall

As many will have noticed, there are new crash barriers and a retractable bollard at the entrance to the Hall and Field. This was implemented as an urgent measure following reports of possible occupation by a nearby Travellers group. As the PC own the field, it would be down to the Parish to pay for and remedy any damaged caused to it therefore between the PC and Hall and an extraordinary emergency grant from our Borough Councillors, we were able to safeguard that property expediently for many years to come.

Plans for a playground on the field are still ongoing.

The hall has plans to install high grade kitchen facilities and a veranda to the side of the hall in the near future and when finances are plans are firmly in place.

Alvecote

Sadly, as a result of the pandemic, the play area at Alvecote did have to close. However now having had its usual safety inspections has been reopened and is being enjoyed by many. A new bin has been installed on the roadside, new signs to encourage the correct disposal of dog waste have been put up (and pavement painted signage is due to be done).

Unfortunately during lockdown, an unacceptable increase in incidents of various sorts developed in the area. As a result of lockdown, the County Council were unable to

address those issues with as much affect as would be hoped and the police in turn were stretched, like in most areas of the country. There have been recent staffing and structural changes to the management of the site with a new Site Manager and enforcement officer. These include Cheryl Bridges, Ffion Rees, Charlotte Hughes and Tamsyn Keyte. We are delighted to hear that Alvecote appears to be a calmer place at the moment and we hope that shall prevail. The PC shall continue to engage robustly with the Council Officers and the Police. There is now a new CCTV system in place which can be accessed remotely without having to have a site visit should the need arise and we understand that a grant has been made available for new boundary fencing to be put in place in the near future.

It was also brought to the PC attention that there are missing access/direction signs for the paths in the land surrounding Alvecote and this is being looked into

Policing

As previously mentioned, the area sadly lost PCSO Sarah Fretter very recently who has moved on to the BTP. Last year our new PC Mark Redman joined us and he is paired with PCSO Simeon Hobson. We are advised that 2 additional officers are due to join their team in the upcoming months. In addition, were delighted to hear very recently that a consultation is underway for a Police satellite hub to be situated in Polesworth. The PC shall continue to monitor and advised as and when more information becomes available.

The Police would like to reiterate the need for calling 101 to report ANY incidents of anti-social and criminal behaviour (unless there is a serious crime in action or person/s are in immediate danger).

Planning

The site to the left of the village hall still has underlying planning permission for x24 houses, although no buyer has come forward therefore the plans for the future are unknown. The PC shall continue to monitor any developments as and when and if they occur.

Traffic Safety

During the past 18 months there has been consultation with the CC regarding speeding and village gateways into the village. The pandemic did to a degree put these on hold and with a change of department structure within the Highways department, we've picked up this issue again. It has been confirmed that some sort of village gates will be installed at the entrance to the village coming from Newton Regis and plans to push back the 30mph. We are awaiting clear information as to what is actually on the drawing board for Shuttington and as soon as we have that, shall review and advise villagers. We are aware that Austrey is having work done in their local area and that Shuttington shall follow,

although a time frame has yet to be established, but expected this year. This also applies to the impact on our Parish from the Robeys lane development. We are expecting a further consultation opportunity to arise at some point in the future and shall be pursuing the default direction of traffic at the bottom of the hill to be changed in order to alleviate the anticipated increase in traffic, amongst other possible suggestions.

We did have a group of very dedicated Speed watch volunteers operating during the past couple of years for which we offer our thanks. As this group has currently suspended activities and in the absence of a coordinator, the Speed gun and equipment is in the process of being sold. However, Shuttington & Alvecote will hopefully still have access to this equipment or equipment from other sources should they wish to resume this project.

Dog fouling/Litter

Claire Holloway and a sturdy weather resistant team of litters pickers have actively been clearing the area on a regular basis of discarded unwanted. We are very grateful for this, in addition to the bus stop cleaning and road signs cleaning. I am sure more volunteers would be most welcome, including similar scrubbing and picking in Alvecote if anyone would like to embark upon that.

Notices regarding dog fouling have been put up again strategically in many places, and dog pavements painted signs are also due in Shuttington (as well as Alvecote as previously mentioned). In the absence of a Dog Warden, it is down to us to try and identify and report any offenders.

New bins have also been installed at the end of Laundry Lane, and at the bottom of the hill on the corner by the pathway parallel to the fishing lakes.

Emergency Plan

The local Emergency Plan is being reviewed and should be completed in the near future.

Unitary Authority

The pending decision on how the Unitary Authority process will be impacting our local area is still awaited. It appears that this change of governing style shall be 2-3 years away in some form, either as Unitary or as a North and South sectioning. We shall keep parishioners informed.

Census 2021

This year has also seen the 10 yearly Census conducted. The reports we have received from the regional coordinator are that the take up was extraordinary and our locals and Support Group assisted many villagers in completing it. The importance of the information gathered is not limited to simply knowing who lives where, but is

instrumental in deciding where facilities and resources need to be directed in the medium and long term future.

Upcoming projects (To be Discussed)

There are plans in the making to turn the Milner Drive Green into a Wildflower haven and biodiverse area for the benefit of not only flora and fauna, but also parishioners.

Funding for x3 benches has successfully been secured courtesy of Dave and Marian Humphreys. One of which is designated for Milner Drive. another for the Church Yard and the third for the green in Coronation Crescent. The PC is currently awaiting decisions from the relevant authorities in order to progress their placement.

It is being considered to re-establish a larger and more accessible Notice Board for Shuttington in order to more comprehensively advise on Parish business and information. The previous location at the bus stop appears to be the most preferable placing. This is open for consultation.

The pathway between Coronation Crescent and Church Lane has been identified as possibly being unsafe, inaccessible and in need of review. Suggestions are being discussed with regards to having this area converted into a ramp in order to accommodate all abilities of mobility and also lighting that would make the area safer whilst not impeding on the neighbouring properties.

In closing this Annual Open Parish Meeting, may I extend our continued best wishes to all for your wellbeing over the next months and hope very much that we shall see you at future Parish Council Meetings. Without the input and contributions of whatever nature, we would find it more difficult to address the concerns and wants of those that live here. It's your Parish, it's your home and we want to do the very best for you. Therefore please attend when you can or email or call us.

Thank you