

Chairmans Report for 2022/23

Parish Councils are an unusual body of people. They receive no payment for the work they carry out on behalf of the parish, but take on the task because they want to see the village be looked after and improved where necessary, but they have to work within very limited powers to do this. We have well established links with the County and District Councils as we have no direct power or responsibility to improve Highway issues such as pot holes, speeding, parking, etc. nor Planning, Housing, Fly tipping, overgrown hedges, street lighting etc. but we are always willing to try and help improve the situation for our parishioners by supporting, reporting and hopefully, influencing the responsible local authority for improvements. We have very good connections with our local County and District Councillors and they attend most of our monthly meetings and always try to help and support our requests.

Since the last Annual Parish Meeting it has been busy, but not all requests that are put to the Parish Council can be fulfilled. After extensive investigation, the request to provide a free to use dog walking area, within the village, where dogs can be let off the lead and socialise was unable to progress, due to our restricted financial resources, and the lack of land available. The cost to fence such a project alone was beyond our budget and then its continued maintenance would be a high financial burden on the parish. After looking into this project, it was understandable why these areas are based on a fee paying cliental.

The Parish Council is responsible for the playing field which is a great facility within the village. This year we have erected a pedestrian barrier up by the B1188 entrance and unblocked the dyke and drain near Chapel House when it was found the water was not flowing. This resulted in LCC then unblocking and cleaning the all the road drains along North Street. We suffered a small amount of mindless vandalism at the end of the summer holidays when 3 of the litterbins in the field were uprooted, and they have since all been reinstated and there has been no further incidences.

As part of the Queens Jubilee, we had the children's wooden play equipment repaired and repainted to help extend its life, whilst we start saving to eventually carry out major improvements in that area. The installation of the multiuse exercise equipment was a great project, which came about after receiving many requests during lock down to improve facilities for older members of the parish. We achieved this thanks to a grant from FCC Communities Funding and support from a local developer. The equipment was officially opened in October. The Village Hall garden area, also had a major face lift, prior to the Jubilee, after many of the shrubs had outgrown the space and it was planted up with red white and blue flowers to mark the occasion. Our final project for the Jubilee was to name all the footpaths and snickets around the village and mark them with signage depicting the jubilee logo.

At Parish Council meetings, Highways is always a controversial topic and understandably residents come to report problems, but unfortunately, we can only request improvements the same as any parishioner can do, which is generally on the FixMyStreet website. Saying that, we have been campaigning for several years for a speed reduction on the B1188 and a school safety zone on Church Street. We are pleased to have finally been notified that the speed will be reduced to 40mph from 50mph, we are just waiting for confirmation when it will be implemented and the school safety zone is currently under consultation.

The condition of Fen Road has also been a big problem and after a site meeting and a visit from the head of Highways with our County Councillor it is finally being put forward to the assessors team along with other roads in the Fen area. So we will need to keep pushing that issue. Repairs to a couple of footpaths and the resurface of the Ashby/B1188 junction have taken place after we

regularly reported the problems. LCC have finally adopted the roads and footpaths within Chestnut Close, but not the footpath called The Smoot, between North Street and Greendykes. This means they will not maintain it. We have requested they look into it and will continue to pursue it.

The maintenance of Flood Relief Scheme constructed from the North round to the east of the village, has created issues as since its completion LCC had not set up a maintenance scheme with the Internal Drainage Board. But, after many months of letters and meetings it has finally been sorted out.

Other assets that come under the responsibility of the Parish Council are dog waste and litter bins, the defibrillator and bus shelters. This year 2 new dog waste bins have been purchased and placed at Harrowby Close and Greendykes. The glass bus shelters' seat has been repainted. The old noticeboard re-varnished and the Lock-up door treated with preservative. The defib has had new a new battery and electrode pads and we have also now arranged L.I.V.E.S to carry out training on how to use a defib and basic resuscitation at the June Village Hall Coffee morning.

As flooding is a concern in Digby, we have recently taken part in a consultation with the Environment Agency about the Beck and now a with LCC regarding Riparian responsibility, by keeping our situation current with both these departments we are hoping when funding becomes available they will know what work would be required to help keep the village safe.

The plans for the coming year include improvements to the road into the playing field and repairs to the dug-out which lost its roof in the recent strong winds and the setting up of a Community Speed Watch team within the village, this is in conjunction with the Road Safety Partnership. The scheme is to be run by volunteers and the equipment will be purchased by the parish council to support this. This project has already started, we have currently 5 volunteers and we are just waiting for confirmation of the permitted sites where they will work from, from the Road Safety team. There has been a delay due to major project being carried out by LCC to monitor all the roads around Lincoln. Once we have the confirmed sites the Road Safety Partnership will carry out the training and we hope more volunteers will come forward.

As you are aware the local elections will take place in May and please note Digby Parish Council will not be having an election as it has been uncontested and we have one vacancy.

The Parish Council is made up of seven members, but only 6 stood, so if anyone would like to put themselves forward, please write to the Clerk. Having a full council will certainly help to continue the task of keeping the village a place that is safe and pleasant to live in.

Any Questions