

AILSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Welcome to the Annual Parish Meeting and it is good to be back in our normal meeting place at the Ailsworth Methodist Chapel. We began the year with a full complement of 7 councillors but unfortunately Jon Phillips left the council due to other work commitments, we thank him for all his work with the council including painting the phone box which houses the defibrillator.

Working conditions have not been easy for most people during the last 2 years but we have been able to move slowly ahead with some of our planned projects although they have taken years where we had hoped it would be months. The work with highways/road safety is almost complete – the road markings done and the new MVAS camera and pole should be fitted by the end of this month.

Having had problems for quite a while with the water meter for New Close we had a new chamber and meter fitted with the advantage too that you can read it remotely and don't have to dig the mud out the hole first

The Nature Recovery Group, with the help of a small band of volunteers have already done a lot of work at the rec and are now looking at seeing how the new trees (planted with help of the children from school) and wildflowers are getting established this year. A story telling circle has been created using tree stumps which is popular. We held a very successful Halloween event in the rec when residents came to see what was being done there and they also did a survey to help us to see what they wanted in the village. The Climate action Group also attended the event to keep residents informed on their work

Three providers of equipment were invited to visit the rec and make suggestions for future improvements. These will be considered in the coming financial year. The football area is now used weekly by a local team

There have been many planning applications – mainly for extensions or tree work, we do try to encourage replacements if trees are removed. Our Neighbourhood Plan had to include some provision for new houses. One is being built next to the wheatsheaf house and the village shop is slowly being rebuilt. There are also new plans in to build 4 new houses on the Vogel site.

The garden allotments and field allotments are fully used. Our trees were inspected and in spite of the strong winds earlier in the year suffered very little damage.

The various restrictions and rules for our safety have at times made life more complicated than we would have liked this year but I would like to thank all the councillors, clerk and the all the volunteers who have worked hard to keep things 'nearly normal' and keep our village looking good. The post box still makes us all smile.

Joan Pickett

Chairman of Ailsworth Parish Council

Ailsworth Nature Recovery at The Recreation ground.

A year ago in April, a few of us started a conversation with Ailsworth Parish Council to change the use of part of the mown grass on the Station Road Recreation ground. We wanted to give Nature a better chance to see something different.

Communication, engagement and trust was developed and welcomed to allow a different landscape to start to come through: -

2021 -2022: - A brief summary

A small, committed group of individuals and visiting children from the local school planted over 50 trees.

100 's of square metres of wildflower seeds were planted after removing the turf.

A village working party was arranged to remove some of the long grass at the end of the season

A seating area was established from recycled tree trunks

Numerous bulbs and plants were planted around the seating area and elsewhere

'Turf sofas' were made from the grass clods lifted to give the wildflowers a chance to flourish.

The established trees had a well-rotted bark spread on a 6/10-foot diameter in order to keep the nice mowing and strimming men away from the delicate bark.

Meetings were held with the mowing contractor to outline the change of mowing/strimming requirements.

A 12-year-old established Oak tree was transported and successfully re-planted in order to be part of the Queens celebrations later this year.

Spring 2022 onward: -

It is fingers crossed time that the optimism of last year show rewards of growth and blooms.

So far both the small whips and the older trees are showing good growth. Additional staking of the larger trees was undertaken to help them through the high winds earlier in the year. To date all look good. The snowdrops looked splendid and will come up each year.

A budget has been agreed for: -

- Planting of yellow rattle which looks good and keeps the grass down to allow wildflowers to thrive.
- ongoing maintenance, trimming the long grass for the wildflowers
- additional beds to be prepared and planted with more wildflowers.
- 2 picnic benches to be installed to let people relax and enjoy the outdoors.
- Commemorative plaques for the children and Queen to be designed and installed.

The above is part of what has and will happen. It is a beginning not the end.

I / we would love you to get involved in planting/ trimming/ watering / giving ideas. Drop me a line.

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Road Safety report for Ailsworth Parish Council

1. The group led by Richard Anker has met on line and once in person on the green opposite the coffee shop. Main purpose to consider speed watch and we met with the person who would provide training. Unfortunately the current number interested in volunteering is too small for a group to run. We have advertised via FB and posters. Need to reconvene group and make a final effort to recruit

2. Speed camera installation after much badgering it would appear that camera / pole is soon to be erected by PCC and the installed by Councillor Langston Jones assisted by Richard Perkins
3. Road markings these, after a few adjustments / corrections have now been completed on roads entering the village
4. A letter has been received addressed to CPC re concerns on traffic and parking around the school. I / Jenny replied saying we would follow up with CPC at our next joint meeting but there does not seem to have been one.
5. Some discussion at APC meetings re Police involvement in safety / speed issues not yet followed up
6. Residents spoken to informally appear to be happy with the road markings and installation of a speed camera in due course

Councillor Anne Perkins, on behalf of the Road Safety Working Group

Ward and City Councillor report

Thanks to your support, since May 2021 I have had the privilege of representing our picturesque rural ward of Glington & Castor at Peterborough City Council. This has provided me with the opportunity to see how the council operates on a day-to-day basis, as well as how key decisions could influence our ward. Here working closely with my colleague and fellow ward councillor Peter Hiller, we were able to develop and oversee various new projects;

- **John Clare Countryside Project** – Myself and Peter Hiller were able to work with Mr Astle of the Langdyke Trust in 2019 when the natural habitat creation and preservation plan was first presented. I am since delighted to see how Ailsworth Parish Council as well as many others in our ward have supported this project.
- **Castor & Ailsworth Cricket Club Funding** – Recently I was delighted to secure £10,000 of funding from Viridor Community Fund for our local cricket club. This much needed funding will help the club improve facilities at the ground, meaning it is coping with the increasing demand, and continuing to be a true community asset for our village.
- Working with NPT and Castor Parish Council to ensure that the development of the Woodlands site is sustainable and beneficial for all. With a focus on ensuring that local residents are unaffected by the increased traffic potential, particularly on matchdays.
- Recently work has begun with senior council officers to tackle the flytipping issue we have in our ward. I am delighted to see that covert cameras are now installed in regular 'hotspots' in Castor & Ailsworth, with many more locations being reviewed. Please let me know if you feel there are any locations in Castor & Ailsworth that would benefit.
- **Climate Action Plan** – I have been in dialogue with the principal climate change officer at PCC to see what we could be doing locally to help reduce carbon emissions. A Local Area Energy Plan is currently being developed for Peterborough, looking at the current and future energy demands of the city. A parish council action plan template/guidebook is also currently being developed by PCC. Once this is available and format decided, I will circulate with local Parish Councils.

Over the course of the remainder of 2022 and indeed 2023, I will aim to continue to progress current projects mentioned above. We have had challenging circumstances with the pandemic, and isolations etc over the last couple of years. But as we return to some kind of normality, we can hopefully continue to look forward. I will be working with our MP Shailesh Vara over the next year on how we can improve transport links in rural constituencies and villages like ours. Once the Woodlands development has been completed, I will arrange a Castor & Ailsworth wide

traffic survey so that we can see the true traffic impact on our villages, and then put the appropriate calming measures in place if necessary. As I am sure you are aware, the recent boundary commission review that could potentially see our rural villages subsumed into the urban Peterborough constituency has just finished phase 2. Across both phases of the review, numerous local residents expressed their concerns on the impact this would have on our villages. We now await the boundary commissions final proposals, and once available I will circulate. As always, I am available via email and phone should there be any issues I can help with.

Cllr Saqib Farooq (Glington & Castor Ward)