

Chairman's Annual Report - June 2012

The most important issue on your Council's agenda at the moment is the revision of the 2005 Parish Plan, which needs up-dating to reflect the changing political scene and also any changes in your views about housing, development, transport and the general environment of our two villages. More on how you can help us with this later.

This is a prelude to the emerging need for a Neighbourhood Development Plan, under the Government's Localism Act, which will be the vehicle through which we will seek to influence the type of development in the villages over the next 10-15 years. As we gradually learn how planning and development will work in the future it is highly likely that the level of housing development will be decided by Cheshire West and Chester and included in their Local Plan, following guide-lines from the Government about meeting the national housing shortage. Early indications are that CWaC envisage only a modest level of new development in Tiverton and Tilstone Fearnall in the future.

We have established a Parish Plan working party and we have already held two exploratory meetings, at which it was decided to re-issue the 2005 questionnaire, with some minor modifications, to establish your views on key issues. However, an important requirement for any Neighbourhood Development Plan is that it must not be prepared simply by the Parish Council – other individuals, groups, organisations, businesses etc. must be involved, as appropriate. We have prepared a hand-bill setting out what is involved in a little more detail, that is on display in the village hall and is also included later in this newsletter. We do need your help to take this forward.

Turning to other matters, the year has seen the very successful renovation of the War Memorial, the preservation of kissing gates that CWaC had removed against our expressed wishes and the strengthening of the Home Watch scheme under Councillor Mike Turner, including the placing of more Home Watch signs.

At a recent meeting of the Council we approved a small grant towards the re-furbishment of the Village Hall and another towards the installation of a traffic-activated sign for the A49 in a further attempt to reduce traffic speeds.

Many of you responded to the Council's circular about a planned caravan site in open countryside on Huxley lane, as a result of which planning permission was refused. Also the strongly-expressed views of residents finally resulted in the refusal of planning permission for a second entrance to 2, Townfield Lane, which would have impinged on access and parking for the many users of the public footpath, as well as on the visual amenities of local residents.

Steve Armitage has taken over the responsibility of being our "Digital Champion" to liaise with CWaC's "Connecting Cheshire" initiative and ensure that we make the most of any opportunities to improve our currently snail-pace Broad Band speeds. I am delighted that our former Parish Clerk, Phil Sanders, has re-joined us after a short absence. Our thanks go to Roger Cheshire for holding the fort in the meantime, alongside his many other contributions to the work of the Parish Council.

Finally my thanks go to all my fellow Councillors who have not only contributed strongly to Parish Council Meetings but also attended many other events and meetings to support our main role of serving the community. I have been elected to serve as Chairman of the Council for another year and I will do all that I can to further the interests of the local parishes and deal with residents' issues, so please do not hesitate to contact me or other members of the Council with your concerns.

Gordon Ibbotson, Chairman