

Norton APM April 27 2021

Welcome to the first Annual Parish Meeting for 2 years.

Back in September 2019 we received the results of the Housing Needs Survey, which proved there was still a need for affordable housing with the village. The Council has been working with Northants Rural Housing for 6 years for an extension to Goulden's View, which is now coming nearer. Planning for 10 houses and 2 self-build plots was granted towards the end of 2020, it just remains for the section 106 agreement to be finalised before building can commence, which should be Summer 2021 with completion Summer 2022.

The village now has Superfast Broadband, this came first from MYcomms which is relayed from a mast on the village hall and latterly from Gigaclear who dug trenches through the village to lay cable to each property. This has been an immeasurable improvement on the 0.5 Mbps we were getting on a good day with BT.

The Neighbourhood planning group are still persevering with the Neighbourhood Plan, you never know 2021 may be the year we see its adoption.

The Village Hall is owned by All Saints Church, Norton, and was leased to the NVCA. The lease ran out 7 years ago but the NVCA has continued to run the hall. Unfortunately they are unable to get any grants because they have no security of tenure. The Parish Council had considered trying to buy the hall and to this end sold the building known as the Pound to Mr Trevor Eales who had rented the building for some years. The money will be held until a suitable capitol project can be found.

The playground at Jack's Patch is showing its age and costs to maintain the facility are rising substantially, this will need to be discussed seriously over the next few years.

We have been well served by our District and County Councillors over the years but this year has seen the formation of the new Unitary Council of West Northants. The elections for seats on this Council take place on May 6<sup>th</sup> and until then we do not know who our Councillors will be, or how exactly this will work in the future.

Our latest venture, in co-operation with the traffic group, is the purchase of a Speed Indicating Device or SID, this has recently gone active in the village and will be moved to different sites from time to time, it will be interesting to see what effect this has on the speed of traffic throughout the village in the future.

What a year 2020/21 has been, this time last year it was impossible to have foreseen what an effect Covid would have on our lives. We unfortunately lost 3 of our residents to Covid-19 and their names will be inscribed on a plaque to go on the bench by the village green. Parishioners rallied around to help others who needed shopping, prescriptions and lifts, and our thanks go to all those who helped in any way.

It's almost 18 months since we welcomed our new clerk, Erica Fothergill. She has brought with her a wealth of knowledge and now has us on the straight and narrow and well equipped to face the challenges ahead.

Kim Russell

Chairman Norton Parish Council