

## 2021 Chairman's Annual Report

I start my report by reflecting on the fact that in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century we face a pandemic that at first seemed like a fourteenth century plague, with nearly everything shut down and all of us called upon to help those who have been affected by it.

The pandemic has shown us the best in the people in our community. We saw a Coronavirus Volunteer Group quickly set up and established at the beginning of the first lockdown with over 40 volunteers supporting our isolating and vulnerable residents. The volunteers did shopping, gardening, dog walking and befriending, often just being there for a chat to those lonely and vulnerable residents. This volunteer group undoubtedly helped lift people through the pandemic. Secondly and further into the first lockdown we saw the start of the Community Food Bank. The food bank was run by the Parish Clerk Janice Towndrow and Carol Halpin, together with a group of volunteer delivery teams. The village once again rallied; monetary donations were made and lots of food was and is still being donated to this wonderful scheme.

In 2020 Cropwell Bishop Parish Council welcomed a new Co-opted council member, a local man **Jacques Lacey** who has a strong family relationship with the village dating back to his Great Grandfather an agricultural worker and his Grandfather a Gypsum Miner.

We also said a sad farewell to **Howard Kendall**, a former member of the Parish Council and the first organiser of the Nottingham City Festival who passed away in December 2020 at the age of 94 after a long illness.

### Parish Council Meetings

Like all life during this pandemic, the Parish Council have not been able to meet in person as a group and have become accustomed to 'ZOOM' meetings which have seemed to work very well.

### Town & Parish Conferences:

Cllrs have 'attended' these conferences via the use of 'ZOOM' and have found them constructive. Recent conferences have concentrated mainly on new

building throughout the Borough, however the most recent conference made us more conscious of the problem of single use plastics, so we decided as a Parish Council we should join the Borough in its campaign to reduce single use plastics in our community.

### **The Environment:**

The main issue facing the Parish Council is the number of new applications to build in the Green Belt. Unfortunately, our well thought out arguments put forward in these objections are being ignored by Borough's Planning Officers.

A major concession we have managed to win from the Borough planners is that in future Hedgehog Highways must now be provided in all planning applications. At the January 2021 Parish Council meeting the Clerk confirmed a Hedgehog Highway will be included as part of the new development off Church Street.

We have recently seen the start of a new Cropwell Bishop Litter-picking Group. This group are focusing on litter-picking in the areas our Village Ranger/Lengthsman is not able to target. I have to say it is making a huge difference to how the entrances and surrounding areas to our village look. It is also stopping the plastics and waste affecting our wildlife. The group is doing a great job.

### **New Co-op and Car Parking Problems:**

Rushcliffe BC and the Parish Council opposed the building of the new Co-op on the Wheatsheaf car park, arguing that this would cause major traffic problems, which have now come to fruition, causing some anger and a lot of distress to residents living in the area. The Parish Council and several residents have been in constant contact with the Officers at Notts CC who are continuing to work on a suitable traffic calming scheme for Cropwell Bishop to address all the issues.

### **Policing:**

Police Constable Caroline Voce will once again try and organise the monthly beat surgeries once the current restrictions are lifted.

## **Community Events/Schemes/Socialising**

The Entertainments Committee have not been able to meet or run events due to the pandemic which has also seen the closure of the Youth Club and the Scouts for the present time. As soon as they are able, they will resume these events with the correct safety procedures in place to move forward.

The Parish Council took the decision that once again we would not run Picnic in the Park due to the pandemic and the uncertainty of when restrictions would be fully lifted. The Parish Council would like to try to organise some form of celebration later in the year to help lift spirits.

Other groups such as the Community Road Safety Scheme, Saturday Café and Cropwell Lunch Club have also not been able to run during the pandemic, However, they are all looking to resume as soon as restrictions allow.

Following the reorganisation of the Gardening Club we now have the Cropwell Bishop Growers & Gardeners who were set to meet once a month at the Old School. This and the Annual Horticultural Show has also been affected by the pandemic, but they are looking to resume in September.

**Old School Jubilee Gardens:** These gardens have been tended over the last year by a group of volunteers, some of whom are members of the Growers & Gardeners club. They have done an excellent job planting, weeding, and watering to keep the gardens looking spectacular for our residents to take pleasure in. I invite all our village residents to come and sit a while in The Old School gardens and enjoy the flowers and surroundings at any time.

## **Play Equipment:**

The Parish Council has been looking at what to put in place at the old Skate Park site at the playing fields and the idea is to put a Petanque (Bools pit) in this area.

## **Memorial Hall:**

All of you may now be aware that the Memorial Hall building is fenced off. A report from committee member Chris Keast, was made via the March 2021 Parish Council meeting and a copy of those minutes are available on the Parish Council website for you all to read.

### **In Brief:**

Mr. Keast had advised that several surveys had been done over the years which gave a limited life span of the building without substantial works being carried out. The Parish Council had paid for a survey done in 2013 by Principal Surveyors, which concluded in the medium-term, that they should either look for a new building or carry out extensive works. The report detailed medium terms as being 5 to 10 years which is where we are now.

In February, the Parish Council released funds held in trust for the Memorial Hall to engage PULSE CONSULTANTS to do a feasibility study and cost estimates for a refurbishment or demolition and rebuild.

Those Estimates are: Refurbishment £537k which would give the building a further life span of 15 years.

Demolish and Rebuild: £1.4million which would give a new build a life span of 60 years.

No decision has been made at the time of writing this report.

### **Acknowledgments:**

**Parish Councillor: John Greenwood** for his continued campaign for improved bus services. **Notts County Councillor Neil Clarke & Borough Councillor Gordon Moore** whose financial help continued advice and support make so many things achievable.

**Gary Jowett:** for ensuring the village had supplies through the pandemic which were hard to find in the supermarkets and his support in supplying goods for the Food Bank.

**Russell Price:** for his financial support of the food bank.

**Jubilee Gardening Group:** My thanks to Sue and Eddie Ward, Julie Pooley, Glyn Greenwood, Pam Wregg, Irene Skerratt, Eileen Hepworth, Maggie Shirran and Natalie Pearson for the hard work and time put in to making the Jubilee Gardens looking spectacular.

**Ray Kimpton:** our Village Ranger for continuing to keep the appearance and cleanliness of the village his priority throughout the pandemic, despite the increased duties that the Lengthmans Scheme has brought about.

**Tony Jarrow:** for the village Website, and with the help of Anne Terzza having brought the village history to all during the pandemic.

**Darrel Towndrow** Who continues to keep our IT up to date, the Website Compliant and who continues to be a big help to me when I need his expertise.

**Parish Clerk:** My thanks to our **Parish Clerk Janice Towndrow** who has kept the Parish Council running efficiently during the pandemic. Together with **Carol Halpin** the Clerk has contributed so many hours to organise, collect and distribute goods to the Food Bank to our village people so severely affected by this pandemic.

Finally, and most importantly this year, my special thanks to the great people of Cropwell Bishop who have given freely of their time to make a success of the Coronavirus Support Group and the Food Bank during this awful time. There are too many to thank individually but each person involved has my sincere thanks. It is truly heart-warming to see that when we find ourselves in real need, our community pulls together to help each other through.

Alan Wilson, Chairman.