

## **CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024**

### **Introduction**

My second year serving as Chairman was to be totally different to my induction year as I am now familiar with most of the statutory procedures that have to be adhered to in order to carry out Parish Council duties. With the help of our most competent Clerk, Janice Towndrow, I have been able to confidently apply my own ideals within the spectrum of such a challenging post within the Village of Cropwell Bishop and thank Jan for her tireless and sometimes unforgiving workloads.

My first main disappointment this session came at the Annual Meeting for the Electorate 2023 where a turnout of less than 30 residents showed me how many people in this Village are actually interested in what is happening around them. Previous commitments, illness and a variety of sound excuses is generally the cause of such low numbers, but as with life today maybe we simply have to accept this scenario for our future and continue regardless. There is a school of thought however that tells you if nobody turns up at such an event it could mean that everyone is happy or satisfied with the way it is running. We know, however, that is not true from some of the complaints we receive, of which unfortunately, some are totally beyond either our remit or indeed our control to resolve.

We have also been operating up to now with a *"one-man down scenario"*, within the Parish Council numbers, but that is not to say we don't have sufficient Councillors to operate efficiently. My take on this is that we are not unique, there are many organisations around, not just Parish Councils, whereby the dwindling numbers of people who are willing to take up any form of responsible position/s within those organisations is falling drastically, and unfortunately due to the age of those managing the said activities, is such that we lose many people sadly annually with little or no replacements from a younger generation.

We are attempting to attract volunteers from the community to assist in the running of events without necessarily serving as a Councillors, and we do have success with our Entertainments Committee, and also our helpers at the Saturday Cafe and regular Cropwell Luncheon, we thank them all for their generosity of time.

We have also recognised that communication can be part of this Village's low support for events, as currently from the Parish Council notification is by poster in the various notice boards, an extra one is scheduled within the new Church Street development, by notification within the Cropwell News/website and sometimes posted on the Cropwell Bishop Bulletin Board. Due to the Cropwell Bishop Bulletin Board not being the *"official"* village Facebook page it has been decided to set up such a page that can be used, for information purposes and hopefully this will create more rounded and better communication channels to include those who prefer Social Media as their link?

### **Activities**

Activities organised, and/or subsidised by the Parish Council, have been in the main very successful and these include the Annual Picnic in the Park, Firework Night Spectacular, Senior Citizens Xmas buffet, Quiz nights and Cinemas. Once again, a great big thanks goes out to all those concerned with arranging these events and also those who helped on the day/night. I would also like to thank the businesses and organisations that have supported some of these events in the form of prizes or equipment that have helped to make them an ongoing success.

There are some organisations and groups that are run outside the bounds of the PC but are supported whole heartedly in any way practical by the Parish Council, these include; the Volunteer Gardeners, the Litter Pickers, the Gardening Club and the CB Allotments. These are activities run by volunteers for the Village, with the Village at the heart of their efforts, and I thank their organisers and participants for their hard work and efforts.

One activity which has grown over the past twelve months is the CKOB (Youth Club) run by Cllr Jo Wroughton, who we thank for all her time and patience devoted to a task that many would run from. With numbers on occasions in excess of 50 it continues to develop within the Old School facility and has gained new equipment this session which has been received with much gratitude by the children.

The Parish Council have backed the continuing development of the Launch Field Football Academy, who currently operate from the Cropwell Bishop Memorial Hall Playing Field, and wish them success in attaining their criteria to develop football activities on the site. Not only has it generated interest from within the village, but also feeds from the surrounding areas thus acting as a catalyst to help with the future of the Hall.

The Cropwell Bishop Memorial Hall charity continues to advance its future proposals to create, in some form or other, a building to house a selection of activities, and hopefully there will be opportunities for the Village to engage with these as they progress. Various events are being organised both as fund raisers and information portals and the Parish Council fully support them in their task, please add your support by attending these events as it will make the task somewhat lighter.

### **Cropwell Meadows**

The new Church Street housing development from Bloor Homes is coming to a close and the Village has received various funding relating to government criteria required to enhance certain aspects within any local areas. New planting continues around the site and once the footpaths are fully functional we hope to return once again to being able to enjoy our open countryside. We are seeing several residents from this area engaging in some of the activities which is very encouraging.

### **Village Life & Issues**

Life within the Village has not been plain sailing for some, and wherever possible the Parish Council have helped in achieving, hopefully, a satisfactory resolution. The weather has been probably the most recent testing for the Village in that we have suffered not only excessive water (thankfully no major flooding like our neighbours in Butler) but high winds, which nearly blew the Christmas Tree out of its mounting. This is obviously going to be a pattern for our future and so where practically possible we have put in place measures to reduce the impact of such anomalies.

Although not everything can be done all of the time, we continue to endeavour with solutions and developments, where we are permitted, and guarantee Cropwell Bishop's best interest always.

The Parish Council continue to battle with Planning issues and as the Permitted Development criteria continues to take any control away from both Rushcliffe Borough Council and the Parish Council, we still attempt on occasions to have our say.

### **Close**

Finally, I would like to thank the current PC for their support in all matters concerned.

Jacques Lacey (Chairman)