

## Stretton-on-Fosse Parish Council Chairman's Report for 2015-16

The 3 Ps of parish councils – planning, parking and dog poo – continue to excite or plague us. The major current planning issues concern Town Farm – a set of 3 lovely old houses, a farmyard and old barns in a prominent part of the village which are being developed. We are keeping a close eye on what happens there.

We continue our struggle to stop our verges being irrevocably damaged by parking, with mixed results. The verges on the gated road have also been so badly damaged and so deeply rutted in January this year when 100s of vehicles of all sizes tried to use it as a diversion in both directions after a major accident on the Fosse – now so badly damaged as to be dangerous should a cyclist or pedestrian end up in one and a car would suffer significant damage.

For the third year running I have to report that we are still waiting for the construction of the 5 social houses by Grevayne Properties in Harolds Orchard with no prospect of a start date yet. It is now 3 and a half years behind schedule.

With extreme difficulty we have managed to extract a licence from Grevayne Properties to manage the orchard which is immediately to the west of Harolds Orchard, on which stands the shed which we will use when we take over the management of the allotments (after the houses have been built and transferred to WRHA). We were very grateful to receive a grant for this shed last year.

We voted this year again to keep the precept to £5200 but are aware that we are going to have to spend a considerable sum on maintaining the play area over the next few years and that our grass-cutter SG Mowers, aka Stan, is retiring in 2 years' time and that we will probably have to pay much more for the job.

The crossroads at Portabello have been much discussed this year with a petition (initiated in Shipston) going to WCC asking for a roundabout.

This is apparently too expensive and Warwickshire Highways came up with proposals to stagger the junction, improve signage and provide lighting which in the PC's opinion was better than doing nothing. Cllrs Chris Saint and Izzi Seccombe pulled together the funds needed. However, it was announced in a local paper 2 weeks ago that traffic lights are being installed – a surprise to us and our county and district councillors. We would appreciate if Warwickshire Highways would bear in mind that we like to be informed, if not consulted, of major changes on the roads of our parish. In this case the parish of Stretton-on-Fosse are the most frequent users of this crossroads.

All is not gloom and doom however:

At the end of May 2015 we at last got Superfast Broadband in most of the village, although BT did not put in enough wiring to accommodate all the houses which want it. And there have been teething problems. Thanks to everyone in the village who filled in questionnaires which all helped to show BT that we needed it urgently.

And we are grateful to Age UK (through Cllr Chris Longleather) for running 2 very successful courses called Webwise particularly for older people who would like to improve their IT skills.

The Parish Council's thanks go to Sue Finlay, the parish clerk, for all her work especially for dealing with the finances and explaining new directives from government which most of us find baffling. Thank you to my 4 fellow councillors for their support and advice and being so prompt at dealing with problems when I needed help.

Thank you too to Chris Saint and Jo Barker our new District Councillor for working hard on our behalf.

Izzi Hazelwood

Chairman of Stretton-on-Fosse Parish Council

May 2016