

## **East Haddon Chair's Report**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This year has produced a number of interesting/challenging events. As in previous years, for the sake of uniformity, I have divided my report into three categories: COMPLETED, ONGOING and FUTURE. (This final draft was completed on 27th April 2021.)

### **COMPLETED ACTIVITIES**

The damaged Security Indicator device (SID) was eventually repaired. Despite our contention that there was a fault design which caused the damage as a result of high winds, we eventually agreed to pay half the cost of repair.

Our Parish Clerk produced yearly accounts for internal and external audits, the latter required by law. These were agreed by the appointed auditors. Our clerk is to be congratulated for her hard work in producing this successful outcome.

As in previous years, grants of £1200 each were awarded to the Village Hall and Friends of the Primary School. The PFA has had a particularly difficult financial year due entirely to Covid. Council therefore awarded £2000 to help sustain the excellent contribution the PFA makes towards the village. A grant of £100 went to the History Society. Due to the Covid crisis creating serious cash flow problems for our village organisations, Council agreed to an uplift to £6000 for grants in the budget for 2021/2022. It was further agreed that this sum be awarded to activities in East Haddon only.

The improvements promised to the Parish web-site have been completed. Council recognises that this is an ongoing matter and will need regular updating.

### **Recruitment and Resignations.**

These have been much in evidence this year. As a result of our Parish Clerk, Shirley Cumbleton, deciding to retire, Mrs Emma Gibson was recruited to replace her. Emma is an experienced and CILCA qualified clerk. She started with us on 1st October, and quickly settled into the role. Her appointment was announced on the Parish Council (PC) web-site.

An appeal in the Diocesan Newsletter as well as the web-site for residents to consider joining the Parish Council struck gold! As a result three excellent candidates are now Parish Councillors. They are Jif Cooper, Jon Lambert and Iain Stewart. Their addition to the Council meant that for the first time in a number of years we were at full strength, namely nine Councillors.

Unfortunately since then Council has experienced that well-known saying: "What the Lord gives, the Lord taketh away!" Three Councillors have resigned, namely John Benson, John Beynon and Dick Threadgold. Dick's long service on behalf of the village was recognised in the Parish Council web-site last year.

A further appeal for residents to consider joining the Council has been posted on our web-site and in the Diocesan Newsletter for April.

### **Planning Applications.**

Almost all planning applications that Council considers each year are passed to Daventry District Council (DDC) with acceptance.

Not this year, however! Council's first challenge concerned a planning application which caused a great deal of consternation amongst our friends in St Andrew's Road. A substantial number turned up at a Parish Council meeting to protest. Having heard their impassioned pleas and having discussed the application, Council objected to it. As a result the application was withdrawn. A few months later a revised application, which still caused consternation in St Andrew's Road, was considered by Council (with residents in attendance on Zoom) and rejected. This revised application was withdrawn.

Soon after Council was confronted by a planning application at the Tythe Farm development. This followed a similar route as the St Andrew's applications. Two planning applications, both rejected unanimously by Council. (It will be considered at a full planning meeting of the new West Northampton Unitary Council later in 2021.)

### **ONGOING ACTIVITIES**

Health and Safety issues have had due consideration by Council at each PC. This subject is taken very seriously and any problem, actual or perceived, is attended to with expedition. Council's assets are regularly inspected to ensure their upkeep. This has resulted in Council agreeing to the purchase of a new wooden bench to replace the old collapsed one in Holdenby Road. It will be suitably anchored to prevent theft. The iconic bus shelter (formerly housing for the fire engine) has a significant damp problem. A quote has been agreed by Council to correct this. The work will be carried out in the next couple of months.

### **FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

As in my report of last year, urgent attention needs to be given to the recruitment of two more residents to Council. Let us hope that this subject does not become the hardy perennial it has been in the past!

### **CONCLUSION**

This year past has thrown up some new and interesting challenges for Council to manage. It says much for the dedication and contribution of each of my colleagues that my task has been made that much easier. For this I offer my sincere thanks and future good wishes to you and your families. East Haddon is in very good hands.