

Report for the 2023 Annual Parish Meeting from the Chairman of the Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Pitchford, Ruckley & Langley Parish Council

This report covers activities over the last twelve months, during which six regular meetings were held along with additional meetings of the Appointments Committee to interview and appoint a locum clerk to cover for Anna's maternity leave and for a Code of Conduct training session for Councillors.

Unfortunately, the locum clerk resigned in December and it was agreed at the January Parish Council meeting that I should take on the role of financial officer and acting clerk until Anna's return in June. Prior to her leave Anna completed her CiLCA training and is now fully qualified.

The most significant planning item during the past year was Shropshire Council's decision last May to grant outline permission for 9 dwellings on the Albert Davies' lorry yard brownfield site, following a number of proposals and comments over the previous year. The development of Castle Barns has continued and plans for the second part of the development have just been officially received.

The planning Enforcement Notice relating to the exit from Stoneleigh Close has been shelved as the developer was not able to acquire the necessary land to improve the visibility splay. The exit will be improved as part of the Albert Davies yard development and in the meantime a mirror has been installed to provide for a safer exit from the close.

Highways continue to require attention and it was good to see the road through Pitchford resurfaced. Potholes elsewhere continue to present hazards and residents are encouraged to use the "Fix my Street" on-line system to report these and any other issues. Although the Parish Council submits reports, additional reports from residents will help to increase pressure to get the necessary work done. Although a positive meeting was held with a Highways representative last year there has been no work to date to stop the water which runs through and over the pavement at the bottom of Burnell Bank. This will be pushed again although the situation was not so severe this winter.

Traffic calming remains an issue and, following discussions with Shropshire Council Traffic Engineer, an official 30mph speed limit for Frodesley village and the three approach roads has been requested along with a mirror for traffic leaving the village and better signing of the crossroads. Painted 30mph roundels in the road to reinforce existing signage for all villages should also be installed shortly. Additionally, village gateways are planned for approaches to all villages in the combined parish.

Issues relating to local footpaths and bridleways are also closely followed. An order for a new bridleway to cover the track from Pitchford to Golding is expected shortly following an independent report. Issues relating to the bridleway via Bentley Ford Farm and footpath adjacent to the old Swan Inn at Frodesley are currently with Shropshire Council. The feasibility of a new footpath from Pitchford to Acton Burnell remains on the agenda.

Unfortunately, a general lack of funds at Shropshire Council is impacting heavily on services and the Council's ability to respond to our requests.

Beacon lighting was arranged to mark the Platinum Jubilee – our thanks to Adrian Bruce-Smythe and Acton Burnell Estate. Although tree planting did not go ahead due to lack of suitable sites, the Parish Council supported the Jubilee Picnic at Pitchford Hall which was a great success despite the weather. Many thanks to Cllr Johnson and Anna Morris for their hard work and, of course, James and Rowena Nason for allowing us to use their facilities. The Council proposed supporting a similar event each year, perhaps rotating around the villages. However, there has been no community support for this so far.

New defibrillators have been purchased and installed at Pitchford, Frodesley and Ruckley along with new enclosures at these three sites and Acton Burnell. All four units are now in line with current recommendations.

The Parish Council remains open to providing support to any new community-based groups, particularly if these can make use of Pitchford Village Hall which was refurbished last year. Unfortunately, the mother and toddler playgroup which we supported and which was established last year did not attract sufficient numbers and has closed. Many thanks to the organisers for their efforts.

Although not a Parish Council venture, the community Facebook page continues to provide a useful forum for general community issues, events information, offers of unwanted items, etc. The Parish Council is also using this to publish information on meetings, road closures and other items of interest.

The Parish Council continues to fund Village Views which is published quarterly. Thanks are extended to the volunteer group who work hard on this. The group also produces the Village Directory which is funded from local advertising in both publications. A new Directory is planned for later in the year.

The Parish Council remains in a strong financial position and is continuing to pursue items raised in the Community Led Plan for which funding is set aside.

My thanks go to our clerk, Anna Morris, who we will be welcoming back next month, and of course to my fellow councillors, particularly Carmen Cullis, our Vice Chairman.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. Harrison," with a comma at the end. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Paul Harrison

3/5/2023