

LINTON PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman's Annual Report

Wow! Where did the year go? It has been a very busy year for Linton, and the Parish Council and residents of Linton have had many issues to face. The biggest single issue has to be the Catley Park Wind Farm Application – Catley Park, although well-known many years ago, was not a place that was familiar with newer residents, but everyone now knows its location. The wind farm will be discussed later in detail, by Councillor Hickford, but I would like to mention the teamwork that both the Parish Council and residents showed, in representing the village at the Public Inquiry. It was incredible, whether people were for or against the scheme, they made sure that the Planning Inspector understood the impact on Linton. The Inquiry resumes for its final stages in September with a decision expected by the end of the year. For me the highlight of the inquiry was working with Corrie Newell, Conservation Officer at South Cambridgeshire District Council. Her knowledge and enthusiasm ensures, I hope, that the historic nature of Linton is in safe hands.

On our Parish Council agendas this year, drains and trees have been regular items for discussion. Throughout the year there has been a considerable amount of tree planting, thanks to Cllrs Bald and Rossiter and Mrs Anderson. Hopefully the drainage issues on the second meadow of the Recreation Ground have been resolved.

Among the new residents who moved to the village, we also have a new Rector of St Mary's, the Reverend Steve Griffiths. I warmly welcome him to the village and hope that he will be living in Linton in the near future. There have been a few new properties built in the village too. The Newdigate development is well under way, and the controversial Flaxfields development is causing major problems for the residents of Symond's Lane and Back Road. However, on a more positive note, the new build of the Phase 1 Science Block/Gym/Community Room/Dance Studio at Linton Village College was completed. The building actually blends well with the listed building, and also holds the most amazing facilities for our young people and we certainly look forward to seeing phase 2 and 3.

Some matters have not been resolved this year. The Parish Council is still attempting to sign the lease for the Coles Lane car park, to protect it as a village resource. We are also meeting a brick wall in our search for allotments. We have been delayed by South Cambridgeshire District Council and I think it is fair to say our patience is wearing very thin and we will be calling an allotment working party meeting in the near future to take further action.

The weather has been eventful; we had the August storms with flooding in the High Street and the coldest winter for many years. The weather has played havoc with the road surfaces although parts of the High Street and Back Road have now been prioritised to be resurfaced.

Our Clerk became a local media star in March, when a hand smoke grenade was found on the Camping Close. Colin Tofts, our village custodian found it and kindly took it in the office to hand in to Sue! Sue obtained advice from South Cambridgeshire District Council, and then the Police, and within an hour the Bomb Disposal squad was dispatched from Colchester! The army made it safe on site at the village hall and took it away with them. Not sure how it came to be on the Camping Close but it certainly meant radio interviews, and even made the national press.

The Camping Close Village Green application is still ongoing, and the Parish Council is still waiting to hear whether the matter will go to public inquiry. A recent judgement in the Supreme Court means that the County Council Assets Department are reconsidering their objection. New evidence to support the Parish Council's claim has come to light from the minute books. In 1946, the Parish Council recommended to Cambridgeshire County Council three open spaces to be preserved in the village. One of those was the Camping Close where it was specified that it needed preserving for additional recreation facilities – these minutes will now be sent to the County Council.

So, as I conclude my annual report, I would like to say a few words of thanks. Can I thank our four members of staff, Sue, Anne, Colin and Ivy for their work throughout the year. Also thanks to my fellow Parish Councillors, particularly my Vice Chairman Cllr Bald. Can I also make special mention of Cllr Potter and Cllr Hickford for their support. Cllr Potter who has been a constant source of advice on charring meetings, and Cllr Hickford who has the ability to put my incomprehensible ramblings into something more grammatically correct and logical (sometimes)! But finally I would like to say the biggest thank you to two people, who without their support, I would not have been able to be Chairman of the Council. They are both now very knowledgeable on parish matters, and they are always willing to give their point of view or act as devil's advocate. They are always happy to help me in my duties as Chairman, and help me investigate any issues or problems that residents report even if it means them walking a couple of miles around the village.....so thank you to my children Rebecca and Andrew.

Esther Cornell