**SHUTTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL ASSEMBLY MEETING 2023-2024**

**CHAIRS REPORT**

Welcome and thank you all for coming to this our Annual Parish Assembly Meeting.

The year has been extremely difficult with the resignation of our chair Mr. Nigel O’Mara and the resignation of Parish Councillor Claire Holloway.

Our current Parish Councillors are :-

 Myself Brian Frost, for those who do not know me (Chair). - Shuttington

 Andrew White (Vice Chair). - Shuttington

 Gaynor Barber - Shuttington

 Leita Sly - Alvecote

The Parish Clerk Mrs. Barbara Cox.

I hasten to add that all Parish Councillors give their time voluntarily receiving no remuneration for their efforts or their time committed throughout the year.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all Parish Councillors past and present for their valued support and their continuing hard work carried out during the year on behalf of both the villagers of Shuttington and Alvecote.

I would also like to thank Shuttington resident Liz Odber for her continued support and assistance with the maintenance of the two Defibrillators and the Wild Flower Garden.

It is also appropriate to mention the hard work of the Parish Council Clerks Mrs. Anita Allsopp who retired mid 2023 and Mrs. Barbara Cox who took on the role up to present day. I would like to thank them both on behalf of all Parish Councillors for their efforts and continued support during 2023/2024.

Barbara will be leaving her role at the end of May and is being replaced by Mrs. Joan Daniels who we welcome here today as our newly appointed Parish Council Clerk.

I would also like to thank our Borough Councillor Mr. David Humphries and County Councillor Mrs. Marian Humphries for their continued loyal support and assistance throughout the year.

Despite the financial pressures and inflationary increases imposed, the PC is as always concerned and keen to keep spending within constraints, and has managed to maintain its precept at the same level for the forthcoming year.

Throughout the year the Parish Council have been in negotiations with Elan Homes, the property developers for the proposed new 24 homes adjacent to the Village Hall and Playing Field, in negotiating a public footpath access to the Village Hall through the new development but unfortunately no agreement could be made.

The Village Hall committee have very kindly donated two picnic table/benches and contributed towards the cost of their installation adjacent to the Play Area. They have also kindly purchased and donated to the Parish Council a defibrillator mounted adjacent to the Car Park at the the Village Hall.

The Village Hall committee are separately self financing to raise funds to maintain the Hall in an attractive modern desirable condition. To this end the Parish Council and Village Hall committee are now working closely together.

Christmas 2023 was again hailed a success with the local community enjoying a Christmas Party funded by the Parish Council sponsored Supper Club, which was formed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 lockdowns and an addditional funding contribution from our County Councillor.

There are monthly Coffee mornings held on the first Monday of every month where all local residents are welcome to attend to have a coffee or tea and a slice of homemade cake and of course a chat. These are becoming more popular and well attended throughout the year. The cake selection is ever increasing from Farmhouse Fruit cakes to Bakewell Tarts and Chocolate Cakes.

Thanks must be given to “**All** **Patisserie chefs”** for their varied selection of much desired cakes - there are no crumbs left at the end only used cups & mugs with clean plates.

Future community social events are proposed by the Village Hall Committee for the forthcoming year with information available on the Notice Boards and PC websites, these include :-

1. Village Fete on the 23rd June 2024.
2. Charity afternoon tea in aid of Breast Cancer on the 15th August 2024.
3. The popular Rock Choir on the 19th October 2024.
4. Christmas Bazaar on the 8th December 2024.

The Wild Flower Garden project has still not brought what was anticipated nor envisaged. Numerous written and verbal complaints with suggestions were received from residents and discussions are still ongoing to provide a solution to resolve all outstanding issues. The Parish Council agreed a proposed new mowing plan to be instigated during the forthcoming months which has now commenced. Thanks must be given to both Claire Holloway and Liz Odber for their assistance in over viewing this project and also the Borough Council in their winter mowing of the area.

A further mention and appreciation of our thanks must go to Mr. Nicholas Thomas who maintains the grassed play areas at both Alvecote and Shuttington. Additional thanks also to Mr. Pat Leedham who maintains the grassed areas around the Church. It is indeed a credit to his workmanship and his time donated that the Churchyard always looks well cared for.

The entrance barrier to the Playing Field and Village Hall continues to remain closed as recommended by the Police, resulting in very little anti-social behaviour now being reported. The field, Play Area and kick wall are still fully available to be used by the community. The hire of the field during the summer months by Austrey Archery Club and the Heart of England Whippet Club is proving to be a satisfactory arrangement, ensuring that the field is well maintained and available to residents during evenings and weekends.

The PC has erected and maintains signage requesting that dog owners be responsible and pick up dog mess placing it in the bins provided, this is still periodically a problem. Dog faeces are unpleasant and a health hazard to those using the field, and we would remind all that NWBC are now agreeable for doggie bags to be placed in any litter bins.

The Rural Crime Officer Mrs. Carol Cotterill continues to be active and we would like to give our thanks for her efforts and the continued support of residents throughout the year.

Car Parking on Main Road is still a major problem causing chaos at times. We have been in discussions with our County Councillor in attempts to resolve this long outstanding ever increasing problem. The traffic volumes have increased drastically since the opening of the Industrial Estate at Junction 11. Once the new development by Elan Homes is completed further increased volumes of traffic along Main Road will only make the congestion worse.

The Parish Council will continue in discussions with our County and Borough Councillors in attempts to resolve this long outstanding issue.

The pathway between Coronation Crescent and Church Lane continues to be on our list of things to do. We are still awaiting a response from our new Borough Councillor.

The bus stop shelter in Alvecote has been refurbished after the accident damage.

Close links with the Police have been maintained throughout the year with monthly reports submitted from the Local Police. Their increased presence in the villages has had a positive impact in reducing crime in the area.

The PC website is continually under review and the new Clerk will be taking on board the updating of all relevant information. Thanks to Mr. Nigel O’Mara for his assistance in updating the website until the new Parish Clerk Mr. Joan Daniels is officially in office.

Should any villagers have photographs or information that could be used on the website, the Parish Council would like to hear from you.

Finally we as a Parish Council would encourage residents to become more involved within the community. There are currently two vacancies for Parish Councillors one for Alvecote and one for Shuttington. If anyone is interested in becoming a Parish Councillor please speak to the Parish Clerk Mrs. Joan Daniels after the meeting.

Once again thank you for attending this annual open meeting and I hope that this report has been informative and answered any questions that you may have had.

BRIAN FROST

Chairman Shuttington & Alvecote Parish Council